

Hunters Illustrated

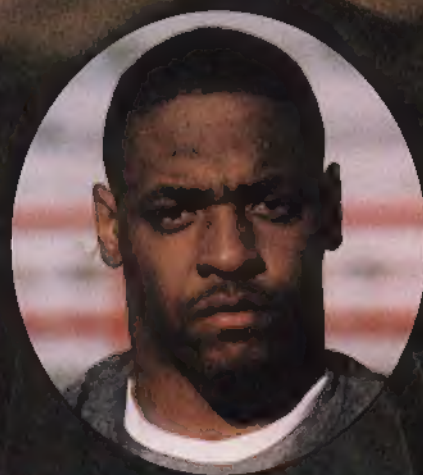
Volume 19, No. 7
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Bobby Newcombe



DeAngelo Evans

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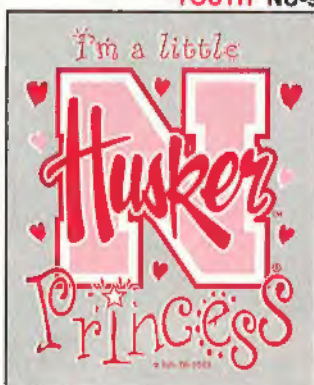
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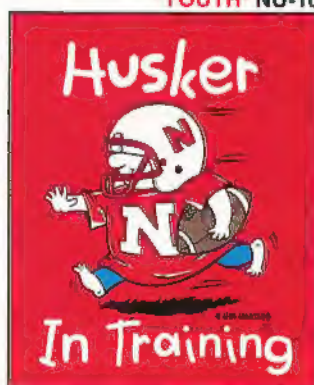
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Second-year Coach Frank Solich eliminated much of the suspense regarding who his starting quarterback would be. *By Mike Babcock*

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ON THE COVER

Quarterback Bobby Newcombe, I-backs DeAngelo Evans and Dan Alexander and tackle Adam Julch are among the Nebraska players returning from injuries. *Photo by Scott Bruhn*

NEXT ISSUE

The Iowa Review/California Preview should mail about Sept. 7



It's Time For The Answers

*Most questions on offense
entering 1999 season*



**Brian
HILL**

THE NEW skyboxes are up; the FieldTurf is down.

What was already a great venue for college football looks even more impressive. The refurbished Memorial Stadium and Tom Osborne Field will provide a wonderful setting for answering the questions about Frank Solich's second Nebraska team.

Is Bobby Newcombe fully recovered from knee surgery, and will Nebraska fans finally get to see him play quarterback at full speed?

Newcombe, who was declared the likely quarterback starter early in fall camp, was injured in the season-opener a year ago and slowed for the five other games in which he played.

"It's time to get this team together and start winning some football games," Newcombe said at Nebraska's Media Day Aug. 11. "Let's put this 'How's the knee?' back in the past and forget about it."

Will DeAngelo Evans be able to return to the form of his freshman season, when he rushed for 776 yards and 14 touchdowns before missing most of the last two seasons because of a variety of injuries?

"I want to be there for this team for 13 games," Evans said. "That's my goal, to be there for the long haul."

Will the offensive line be improved enough for Nebraska to return to the top of the leaderboard in rushing offense?

"They're bigger, they're stronger, they're more experienced, and I will presume that will show," Solich said.

That unit's resolve was tested even more when senior Jason Schwab, the returning starter at right tackle, suffered torn ligaments in his right knee on the first day of practice in full pads and was lost for the season.

The "experts" around the country

obviously think Nebraska has enough talent to overcome a few obstacles. Both the Associated Press media poll and the USA-Today/ESPN coaches poll listed the Huskers No. 6 in preseason rankings. They must know something. Right?

In any event, it should be an exciting year, and all of us at Huskers Illustrated are looking forward to it. We will preview and recap every game with stories, photos, commentary, notes and quotes and statistics.

You'll find several new features in Huskers Illustrated this fall. In the next 10 issues, we will present 10 teams of the decade. For trivia buffs and word game fans, we've added "This Week in Husker History" and a crossword puzzle.

In celebration of 25 years of women's athletics at Nebraska, we will feature stories with Husker women student-athletes from the late 1970s and 1980s, remembering the way things were and discussing how things have changed.

Speaking of changes, reg-

ular contributor Bill Doleman is leaving the state to do the play-by-play and coaches' shows for the University of Houston Cougars. Doleman has hosted several Nebraska-related television programs, including the coaches' shows for Solich, Terry Pettit and Paul Sanderford. His final "Off The Set" appears on Page 10.

We wish Bill well and will welcome Bob Schaller to the lineup in the next issue. Schaller, the former sports editor of the Scottsbluff Star-Herald, is a freelance writer who covers Nebraska football. He has written several books on Husker football, with the subjects including Tommie Frazier and Kenny Walker. ■



Got Something To Say?

Please send your comments and questions to: Letters, 3210 NW 3rd St., Lincoln, Neb. 68521. You can also fax them to us at (402) 474-5132. We reserve the right to edit the letters for clarity, content and length. For those with electronic mail abilities, Hleditor@aol.com.

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Scott Bruhn



Coach Frank Solich (right) checks out the nearly completed new FieldTurf surface at Memorial Stadium in early August. The same surface was installed earlier in Cook Pavilion, where the Huskers were able to adjust to the turf before practicing for the first time in the stadium Aug. 17.

NU NOTEBOOK

A New Surface

Tom Osborne Field at Memorial Stadium will have a new surface when the Cornhuskers play California there in the home opener on Sept. 11. Astro-Turf has been replaced by FieldTurf, a carpet blend of polyethylene and polypropylene set on a patented fill of recycled rubber and silica.

The project cost to Nebraska was reported to be \$248,000, with the company installing the FieldTurf receiving the removed Astro-Turf, which it plans to market to Cornhusker fans.

After its costs are recovered, the company indicated it would donate any remaining money to the Teammates mentoring program established by former Coach Tom Osborne and his wife Nancy.

Osborne is a national spokesperson for FieldTurf, which is more like natural grass and will reduce the possibility of certain types of injuries, according to research.

Coach Frank Solich told

the Lincoln Journal Star that FieldTurf, which also has been installed in the Cornhuskers' indoor practice facility Cook Pavilion, "plays faster than grass."

"It probably plays somewhere between grass and turf, but that remains to be seen," he said.

Memorial Stadium is the first collegiate facility to

have FieldTurf.

Although the field will still bear Osborne's name, that fact will no longer appear on the FieldTurf itself. ■

33 Join Team As Walkons

Nebraska's walk-on tradition began with Bob Devaney and grew dramatically during Osborne's 25 seasons as head coach. Coach Frank Solich has continued the tradition and was to have welcomed 33 walkons this season, including 15 from out-of-state, when the full squad reported on Aug. 23.

The NCAA allows only 105 players to practice prior to the start of fall-semester classes.

The walkons, as listed in the Cornhuskers' 1999 football media guide:

Blake Anderson, 6-0, 215, WLB, Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast); Andy Bowman, 6-3, 285, NT, York, Neb. (Benedict); Brad Bryan, 6-1, 205, SLB, Norman, Okla. (North); Chad Buller, 6-0, 200, IB, Henderson, Neb. (Heartland); Chris Estudillo, 6-4, 230, RE, Ord, Neb.; Lee File, 6-5, 255, RE, Beloit, Kan.; Kevin Guse, 6-1, 170, CB, Longmont, Colo.; Brian Hale, 6-4, 285, OT, Omaha, Neb. (Gross); Anthony Hoke, 6-1, 195, SLB, Lyndon, Kan.; Kyle Larson, 6-0, 220, P,

Funk, Neb. (Kearney High); Cali Lemelle, 5-9, 165, CB, Hillsborough, N.J. (Immaculata); Tim Liley, 6-2, 195, WB, Lakewood, Colo. (Mullen); Jack Limbaugh, 6-4, 260, OG, Algona, Iowa; Brett Lindstrom, 6-0, 170, SE, Omaha, Neb. (Millard West); Mike Makris, 6-1, 235, MLB, Rhinelander, Wis.; John Mangelsdorf, 6-6, 300, OT, St. Louis, Mo. (Chaminade); Luke McGowen, 5-11, 165, SE, Schuyler, Neb.; Tim Miller, 6-1, 195, WLB, Elmwood, Neb. (Elmwood-Murdock); Brian Nelson, 6-4, 300, OT, Omaha, Neb. (Millard South); Ryan Ommert, 5-11, 175, SE, Cambridge, Neb.; Chad Peterson, 6-5, 265, NT, Elmwood, Neb. (Elmwood-Murdock); Kevin Pitts, 6-0, 230, FB, Brookfield, Mo.; Matt Plooster, 5-11, 175, WB, Malcolm, Neb.; Tim Reese, 6-1, 244, IB, Seattle, Wash. (O'Dea); Pat Ricketts, 5-11, 165, CB, Omaha (Millard North); Steve Safranek, 6-2, 200, MLB, Omaha (Gross); Ronjiel Sharpe, 6-0, 200, CB, Montgomery, Ala. (Sidney Lanier); Stuart Siegel, 6-0, 200, WB, Grand Island, Neb.; Sean Steenson, 6-7, 235, TE, Council Bluffs, Iowa (Abraham Lincoln); Fred Thorne, 5-10, 175, SE, Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast); Chuck Vander Linden, 6-1, 210, SLB, Golden Valley, Minn. (Armstrong); Cody Volk, 6-7, 285, OT, Norfolk, Neb. (Battle Creek); Matt Witulski, 6-3, 290, OG, Loveland, Ohio (St. Xavier).

BEST IN THE NORTH

Some things change, some don't. Despite last season's 9-4 record and second-place tie in the Big 12 North Division, Nebraska is the preseason favorite of conference-area media to represent the North Division in the conference football playoff at San Antonio on Dec. 4.

Defending champion Texas A&M was picked as the favorite in the South Division.

The two favorites had only one player each named to the preseason all-conference team, however. Nebraska was represented by cornerback Ralph Brown, A&M by punter Shane Lechler.

Texas Tech running back Ricky Williams was voted as the preseason "Offensive Player of the Year," with Kansas State linebacker Mark Simoneau the "Defensive Player of the Year." Oklahoma quarterback Josh Heupel, a junior college transfer, was the "Newcomer of the Year."

BIDS ARE IN

Two cities each in Missouri and Texas submitted proposals to the Big 12 to play host to the conference football championship game beginning next season, according to the Associated Press.

Kansas City, St. Louis, San Antonio and Dallas will be considered by the conference board of directors, with a decision probably being made in October. St. Louis and San Antonio have alternated playing host to the three-year-old event, which will be played at San Antonio on Dec. 4.

1999 Schedule

Sept. 4 @ Iowa, 11 a.m., ABC
Sept. 11 California, 2:30, ABC
Sept. 18 So. Mississippi
Sept. 25 @ Missouri
Oct. 2 Oklahoma State
Oct. 9 Iowa State
Oct. 23 @ Texas
Oct. 30 @ Kansas
Nov. 6 Texas A&M
Nov. 13 Kansas State
Nov. 26 @ Colorado, 1:30, ABC
Dec. 4 Big 12 Champ., 2:30, San Antonio, Texas, ABC
Other starting times TBA

QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

STRONG LEGS RUN SO THAT WEAK MAY WALK

Cornhusker freshman fullback Judd Davies was chosen as the outstanding offensive player in the Nebraska high school Shrine Bowl all-star game in late July at Memorial Stadium.

Davies rushed for 146 yards and one touchdown on nine carries and caught three passes for 51 yards to help lead his North team to a 21-12 victory. Taylor Gehman, another Cornhusker freshman, returned a punt 69 yards for a touchdown with 3:23 remaining to seal the victory.

The Cornhuskers were well-represented in the game, with Davies, Gehman, Trevor Johnson and Brett Lindstrom all being selected by their teammates as co-captains. Johnson also played for the North. Lindstrom, a walkon from Omaha Millard West, played for the South.

KINDNESS OF STRANGERS

A cab driver in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, came to Tom Osborne's aid in late July, according to the Associated Press. Osborne arrived in Winnipeg late at night on the way to a fishing lodge north of the city. Because of a reservation snafu at the hotel, he was left with no place to stay that night.

After a \$30 cab ride to find other accommodations in the city was unsuccessful, the cab driver, Sattar Palani, offered to allow Osborne and one of his daughters to spend the night at his home.

"I didn't know who he was, but I thought I should do it," Palani told the AP.

HE'S BACK

Former Cornhusker I-back Lawrence Phillips, whose off-the-field problems are well-documented, signed a two-year contract with the San Francisco 49ers in late July.

The contract is worth a reported \$1.75 million, including a \$425,000 signing bonus.

Phillips earned the opportunity to return to the National Football League after rushing for 1,020 yards for the Barcelona Dragons in NFL Europe. The former first-round draft pick was signed by the 49ers after Garrison Hearst, who rushed for 1,570 yards last season, was sidelined by injury.

The signing of Phillips was controversial, of course. Phillips told the Associated Press that he would attempt to prove his detractors wrong. "I would sign myself, yes," he said.

"I don't see this as a risk."

The 49ers hired former Cornhusker and 49er running back Roger Craig as a consultant to help the 24-year-old Phillips stay on the straight and narrow.

"I have learned never to say never," former Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne told the Omaha World-Herald. Osborne took considerable criticism for his handling of Phillips at Nebraska.

COMING AND GOING

— Al Papik will serve as senior associate athletic director emeritus after officially retiring on June 30, 1999. Papik had been the Nebraska athletic department's second in command, and he will continue working with the football program, helping in the transition until the first of the year.

Papik is in his 27th year at Nebraska, the last 15 in the athletic department.

— In case you missed it, Carl Crawford, a scholarship quarterback recruit from Houston, was not among the freshmen reporting for football practice the first week in August. Crawford was the first pick in the second round of the major league baseball draft in June and signed with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. Though he still could have played football, his contract with the Devil Rays precludes it.

As a result, Jammal Lord is the Cornhuskers' only freshman scholarship quarterback.

— Danny Kimura, the Cornhusker baseball team's starting third baseman the last two seasons, has transferred to the University of Hawaii. Kimura is from Kailua, Hawaii.

His decision was based on a poor sophomore season, in which he batted .259 and committed a team-high 20 errors, and the likelihood that he would be platooned next season.

— Matt Daeges, a senior-to-be at Harlan, Iowa, High School, has made an oral commitment to accept a baseball scholarship from Nebraska, according to the Omaha World-Herald.

Daeges, an outfielder, hit .533 with 14 home runs and 56 runs-batted-in last season in leading his team to the Iowa state high school tournament. Daeges' on-base percentage was .716. ■

Caring

"At Nebraska, our coaching staff was encouraged to genuinely love and care about their players."

— Tom Osborne

During a casual conversation following an interview session related to Huskers Illustrated's 1997 tribute to the career of Tom Osborne, "Osborne: A Silver Celebration," the former Nebraska football coach talked about some of his former players, among them Tim Holbrook.

Holbrook was a walkon from Lexington, Neb. Like most walkons, he was tough and dedicated. He persevered, earning letters in two of his five seasons (1981 and 1982) as a Cornhusker.

He played strong safety, or "monster" in Nebraska's defensive terminology of that time.

He wasn't a starter. He backed up Kris Van Norman as a senior. Yet 15 years later, Osborne could remember things about Holbrook that showed how much the coach cared about his players. All of them.

When the team made road trips, Osborne said, Holbrook would hole up in his room and study. A check of the media guide from 1983 shows that Holbrook had a 3.22 cumulative grade-point average with a business administration major. He was an Academic All-Big Eight honoree.

Osborne wasn't certain, but he thought Holbrook also might have enjoyed reading Western novels, an interest he shared — when he was younger and had the time. In any case, the study paid off, Osborne said, adding that Holbrook had become quite successful in a pharmaceuticals career.

Such interest in the individual is a theme throughout Osborne's latest book, "Faith in the Game," published by Broadway Books and scheduled for release in early September.

"At Nebraska, our coaching staff was encouraged to genuinely love and care about their players," Osborne writes. "In other words, each of them was expected to demonstrate an unconditional positive regard toward the player's well-being. Love, in this case, does not refer to a warm, fuzzy feeling but rather to doing what is in the best interest, long term, of the young men on the team."

That attitude, for which Osborne obviously set an example, was a factor in the run of success that included three national championships in his final four seasons as head coach.

There were others, of course, which Osborne also discusses in "Faith in the Game."

The book, Osborne's third, is a reflection on his Hall of Fame coaching career, a retrospective focussing on a principle-based approach that could be applied outside of football, which, he writes, "often has similarities to businesses and other organizations involved in a competitive arena."

Cornhusker fans will be conversant with some of what he recounts, without the filter of a co-author or ghost writer. Still, the passing of time since his "stepping aside" after the 1997 season provides perspective on events that remain interesting, if not controversial.

One such subject, which doubtless will be the basis for many reviews of the book, is former Cornhusker running back Lawrence Phillips, whose off-the-field problems tested the limits of Osborne's unconditional positive regard toward his players' well-being.

Osborne addressed the issue in his second book, "On Solid Ground," and he addresses it again, admitting: "Even today, I'm not sure I made the right decision in regard to Lawrence Phillips."

"Faith in the Game" contains a few anecdotes that probably weren't widely reported, including an afternoon in the summer of 1997 when All-American defensive tackle Jason Peter sprinted across the field at Memorial and tackled an unsuspecting teammate during a summer conditioning workout.

"Jason told me that he had seen the player loafing and that he felt the player was letting the team down," writes Osborne, who had witnessed the tackle while walking to his office from the weight room.

Osborne reprimanded Peter and told him to apologize to the teammate. "Even though I didn't approve of what Jason did, I couldn't argue with his level of commitment," Osborne writes.

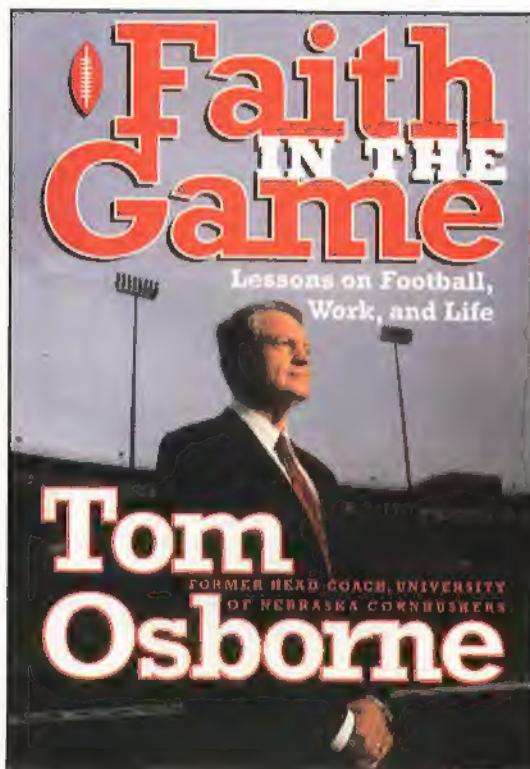
That commitment was at the heart of Nebraska's 1997 national championship.

The strength of "Faith in the Game," however, is reflected in the subtitle, "Lessons on Football, Work, and Life." It provides insight into Osborne, an admittedly private person.

That Osborne was driven to succeed, a fact reflected in 255 coaching victories, is unquestioned. The drive can be traced to his years as a high school and college athlete in Hastings, Neb. "The work ethic and the need to finish what I started stayed with me, almost to an unhealthy degree," he writes.

But there's more to the man than intense competitiveness and football strategy. Osborne quotes liberally from coaches and philosophers, from poets and Biblical scripture. His ideas have been shaped by John Wooden and Warren Buffet, by Stephen R. Covey and Rudyard Kipling.

"Writing this book has been a somewhat therapeutic process," he writes in the introduction. "It provided a formal sense of closure to my experience as a football coach at the University of Nebraska." ■



Pettit's Program An Exception

**Nebraska women's administrator Hibner
says volleyball doesn't get the attention it deserves**



**Mike
BABCOCK**

IN THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT future, the Nebraska volleyball team could begin a sellout streak at the Coliseum, a scaled-down version of what the Cornhusker football team has done at Memorial Stadium since 1962. It could happen. "That's our goal," director of ticket operations John Anderson said.

The signs are unmistakable. Nebraska ranked second in the nation in NCAA women's volleyball attendance last season, behind only Hawaii. The Huskers attracted an average of 3,866 fans to their matches at the Coliseum, which has a seating capacity of about 4,200.

Eleven of the final 12 home matches drew crowds of 4,100 or more.

"It's an amazing atmosphere," said Anderson, whose office had received commitments for about 2,900 of the 3,092 available season tickets for 1999 by the first week in August.

Demand for reserved seating is such that 800 general-admission seats from a year ago have been converted to reserved seating. And general-admission seats will continue to diminish. "If people show up and have a problem parking, they like to have a reserved seat," Anderson said.

Despite the growing interest, however, "I'm really concerned about volleyball right now," Dr. Barb Hibner, associate athletic director and senior women's administrator, said recently.

Not volleyball at Nebraska, of course. It's never been healthier.

A sellout string seems as inevitable as a Nancy Meendering kill.

"I'm concerned about volleyball at the national level," said Hibner. And what affects intercollegiate volleyball at the national level will ultimately affect volleyball at Nebraska.

In the mid-to-late 1980s and early 1990s, volleyball was a showcase sport in women's intercollegiate athletics. Hibner told a colleague at another major university in 1985 that volleyball was "the sport of the 90s. I'm here to tell you, you might not know it, but this is THE sport," she said.

"I was a basketball coach. I was a basketball player at Penn State, captain my sophomore, junior and senior years. I love basketball. I coached it more than I coached any other sport.

"But there is something in volleyball. It is the momentum. It is the reaction. I don't know of any other sport — racquet sports, maybe — where you have to have such quick reaction."

Volleyball is no longer THE women's intercollegiate sport, according to Hibner. The problem is, "I do not see the enthusiasm I saw five years ago by the athletic directors," she said.

Five years ago, about the time Coach Terry Pettit's Huskers were making a run at their first national champi-

onship, women's intercollegiate volleyball benefited from the enthusiasm that followed a bronze-medal finish by the United States women's team at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

"What I saw at that time was more favor," Hibner said. "There was a little bit more publicity."

At the same time, some athletic directors became disaffected with women's intercollegiate basketball because of a divisiveness with men's programs brought about by overly aggressive proponents of Title IX. Coaches in men's programs felt as if they were "going to be out in 2000," said Hibner.

"If you were a white male, 45, there was a lot of resentment built up, and anger."

That anger was directed at women's basketball, which often has been compared to the men's game and not allowed to stand on its own merits, while volleyball "became the favorite daughter."

As such, athletic directors in major conferences, beginning with the Pac-10 and Big Ten, were willing to pitch volleyball to television. "Volleyball was their ideal," Hibner said.

That's no longer the case. The NCAA has focused its attention on football and men's and women's basketball, and conferences have, for the most part, followed suit, leaving volleyball and other men's and women's sports behind in getting the all-important exposure television provides.

Volleyball is "a dang good product," said Hibner. "There's no doubt about it. But the unfortunate thing is, it has not been given the publicity and it hasn't been given the TV (coverage) it deserves."

"All kinds of excuses have been offered up. But the fact of the matter is, you can throw the money in there, and you can make it happen. If you want it to happen, you can make it happen."

If schools are passive and rely on television to take the initiative, interest will continue to decline, except in places such as Nebraska, where Pettit's program has a solid foundation.

Collegiate volleyball needs a national organization such as the College Football Association to look out for its interests. The American Volleyball Coaches Association has done that in the past, but maybe "we can't rely any more on the AVCA," Hibner said. "Something is missing."

"What I see missing is, (volleyball) needs someone, just like the CFA needed Tom Osborne. They had someone to pick, Tom or Joe Paterno. They knew who they could turn to, who they had to pick to get the respect in Washington or wherever it was they were pitching whatever message they wanted."

Pettit could play such a role in volleyball. "Terry is the dean," she said.

Because of that, and the Huskers' remarkable success, "Nebraska is being looked at here."

And what can be seen is extraordinary interest, the envy of NCAA Division I. ■



**Terry Pettit's program
has a solid foundation.**

Saying Goodbye Isn't Easy

Opportunity knocks, Texas-sized door opens for Nebraska sportscaster



Bill DOLEMAN

DEAR NEBRASKA, ET. AL.,

I hope this letter finds you well, well-rested and ready to get back on the Big Red bandwagon, as the Husker family heads into the fall.

How was your summer? If it was anything like mine, it went by quickly. It seems like only yesterday that I was putting away my spring football notes, dusting off my golf clubs and heading out to the links for fun, frustration and a little vacation. Now, all of a sudden, it's time to go back to work. Where does the time go?

I've been asking that question a lot lately. I'll admit, I've been in a nostalgic frame of mind for some time now. Since July 1, to be exact. That's when a phone call gauging my interest in taking a job in Houston began turning my little corner of the world upside down. Was I interested? Initially, no. Why would I leave the best job in Huskerland? Why would I want to leave my home state, new house and my friends?

It wasn't one of those offers that I couldn't refuse, but it is a career opportunity and life experience that I can't pass up. So now, I'm off to a small independent TV station, KTBU, "The Tube," in one of the largest markets in the country to do the play-by-play and coaches' shows for the University of Houston Cougars.

But I leave with mixed emotions. While I'm excited about my new opportunity, it's tough to leave a workplace that was more of a toy than a job.

Ever since I was 9-years-old, when my mom bought me my first Nebraska Football Media Guide, I wanted to work at NU. It was 1975, and I remember reading Don Bryant's bio. "The Fat Fox" was the Huskers' long-time and legendary sports information director. His job interested me at the time and all through high school and my first year of college.

When a student position became available in his office, I doggedly pursued it until I found myself across the desk from my unlikely idol. My job interview consisted of talking about my hometown of Fairbury, Neb., fraternity life, his nickname and his days in the marching band among many topics. I kept thinking, "I clipped on a tie for this?" I was there for at least a half hour before he asked me if I could type and if I was a journalism major. I said yes twice, to which he replied, "well, I guess we'll give you a shot and keep you around for three or four years."

My time in sports info led to a career as a sportscaster that I never thought possible, and those three or four years turned into 14 total at NU and could have easily become 40 more without regret. But when opportunity knocked, God opened a Texas-sized door that I'll humbly walk through, thankful for the memories that I'll take with me from Dear

Ol' Nebraska U.

In my case, opportunity usually called. Like the time in 1989, when Jim Carmichael from Nebraska ETV wondered if I would be interested in doing an audition tape. As bad as it was, he and Steve Alvis took a chance on me, stuck with me and gave me every opportunity to succeed through trial and error. For that, I'm most appreciative.

There was another time when my phone rang one morning at 7:30. "Hello," I answered instinctively but far from awake. "Hello, Bill. This is Tom Osborne," the other voice said. "We're going to be having a meeting about my television shows. Could you be there in a half hour?" Still dazed and confused, but now fully awake and sitting up in bed, I knew there was only one answer. He asked me to host his new half-hour pregame show and thus began my association with HuskerVision, which under Jeff Schmahl's direction, is by far the best of the best in the rapidly growing world of big screens and in-house production facilities.

One thing that I've heard time and again is that the U of H is not NU, but that's the direction they want to go. There is a lot of tradition down there, so it will be fun to be part of the rebuilding process. Still, things will always be different here. Nebraskans and Nebraska fans know that we're a one-of-a-kind people in a one-of-a-kind place.

We Nebraskans and Nebraska fans know what all that means. At no time is it more evident than on game day during football season. Memorial Stadium is and always will be a picture of heaven on earth to me. The feeling of the crisp fall air, hearing the roaring crowd, and of course seeing all that red. It's a Saturday afternoon experience that can last a



A young man from Fairbury got his start working for Don Bryant.

lifetime.

But there's more to appreciate about Nebraska and its Huskers than just football. There are two dozen teams, scores of coaches and hundreds of athletes. There is a staff of professionals dedicated to excellence in all levels of support and administration. From sports information to academics and outreach, to strength and conditioning, to the students, who like me so many years ago, just want to work at NU. It's a family fans can be proud of and one that I'm proud to have been associated with in some small way.

My move to Houston is not one for the heart. That will always be in Lincoln, and one day, I hope I can follow my heart back home because there truly is no place like Nebraska.

Thanks for everything, and keep in touch.

Your friend, Bill. ■

Bill Doleman's face is familiar to Cornhusker fans. He has been host for several Nebraska-related television programs including the "Husker Show" and coaches' shows for Terry Pettit, Paul Sanderford and Frank Solich.

Husker Baseball Worth A Look

*Big 12 Tournament championship, regional berth,
new field proposal give program momentum*



**Curt
McKEEVER**

VENTURE TO THE NORTHEAST behind Memorial Stadium during the middle of a weekday afternoon from late September through the better part of October, and you're apt to witness some pretty fierce practice-session battles.

No big deal, right? We are talking about one of college football's top machines.

Well, in this case, not exactly.

Indeed, after last season the proof is still in the pudding for Coach Frank Solich's

bunch, who will once again be dissected like science projects to see whether serious flaws exist.

And while the masses will have them under the microscope, another group of athletes will work out without much notice on some of the same turf. But you can bet they're no longer anonymous to the rest of the nation.

Fall baseball at Nebraska. The scrimmages this year might be worth more than just a passing look.

Riding the momentum of the school's first Big 12 Conference Tournament championship and first NCAA Regional berth since 1985, Coach Dave Van Horn has goose bumps thinking about the Huskers' immediate and long-term future.

Nebraska returns six regular-position players from a club that went an admirable 42-18 but failed to advance past the opening-round regional at Columbus, Ohio, primarily because its pitching didn't hold up.

Van Horn and his staff have taken major steps at avoiding that problem in the future by putting a premium on arms.

"That's kind of where we put our money, to be honest with you. That's what we want to do," Van Horn said. "The Big 12 is awful offensive, but there's some great pitchers, and for us to win in the long haul, you'd better be able to pitch because you're not going to have good days at the plate against guys like A&M had — a first- and second-rounder.

"We feel like our pitching staff is going to be outstanding. In our fall practices, when we scrimmage, our hitters are going to see upper 80s, 90 mph from the right side. And they're going to see left-handed pitches in the mid-80s up, left-handed breakers. It's going to make us a better team because we can work harder and see what we're going to see from other teams. And if we have an injury or two like we had this past year, we should have enough depth that it shouldn't knock us down too far."

Another carrot Van Horn can finally dangle in front of his team is concrete plans for a new 4,400- to 5,000-seat stadium expected to be ready in time for most of the 2001 season. The announcement for that facility was made in early August by Lincoln Mayor Don Wesely, UNL officials and Lincoln businessman Jim Abel. Those three sides are teaming together on the \$24.4 million project near downtown that also will bring in an independent minor-league team.

"We worked hard last year (in recruiting), and this year I think we've actually covered more ground because now with the new facility situation, we feel like deep down inside we can get anybody," Van Horn said. "We still battle the same ol' thing. I talked to a couple of kids that said they've talked to 'this school' or 'that school,' and the only thing they'd comment is that the weather in Nebraska is tough. We're always going to battle that, but as far as facility and our league, and just a great experience at a college, there's probably not a better place around when we get our new facility completed."

Back to the on-campus battles this fall.

With 23 pitchers on the 40-player roster, pitching coach Rob Childress should be able to establish more solid roles for the 2000 season. Last year, because of injuries, he had to use ace Shane Komine as a closer for a Friday night game, then hope the freshman could come back and start on Sunday.

Komine and fellow right-hander Chad Wiles, two of the four regular starters to return, will be expected to lead the staff again. But the Huskers might actually end up with a couple of lefties in the weekend rotation even though they lost a pair of signees to the professional ranks.

Although there are fewer holes to fill in the field, one is at first base, where a year ago, Nebraska had the nation's leading hitter in Ken Harvey. NU also lost third baseman Danny Kimura, who transferred to Hawaii after a disappointing sophomore season, and designated hitter Jeff Hedman.

Van Horn remains confident there are budding stars waiting for their chance.

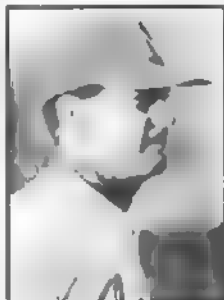
"I think we're probably about as far along as we could've ever dreamed of being, and I think the credit is to the players," he said. "They want to win."

What others are saying about Nebraska's program makes Van Horn smile, even if it is only a momentary one in between recruiting visits and coaches' meetings. Although the 1999 season was dampened by two high-scoring losses to Mississippi State in the regional, the Huskers still warranted the No. 25 spot in two of the three national rankings.

"I had a dad of a player we're recruiting in St. Louis tell me that the feedback from other coaches and professional scouts about our program has been great," Van Horn said. "The scouts made a comment that they really liked watching us play. We had good athletes, and we played hard."

Van Horn expects to see more of that this fall. And he invites anyone on their way to satisfy a curiosity about the football team to stop by and check out his club, too.

"I'm really excited about this fall," he said. "Last fall, I was excited because we got some of our own guys in there, and we knew we were going to be better. This year, there's a greater number." ■



**Dave Van Horn sees
a bright future.**

Curt McKeever is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams

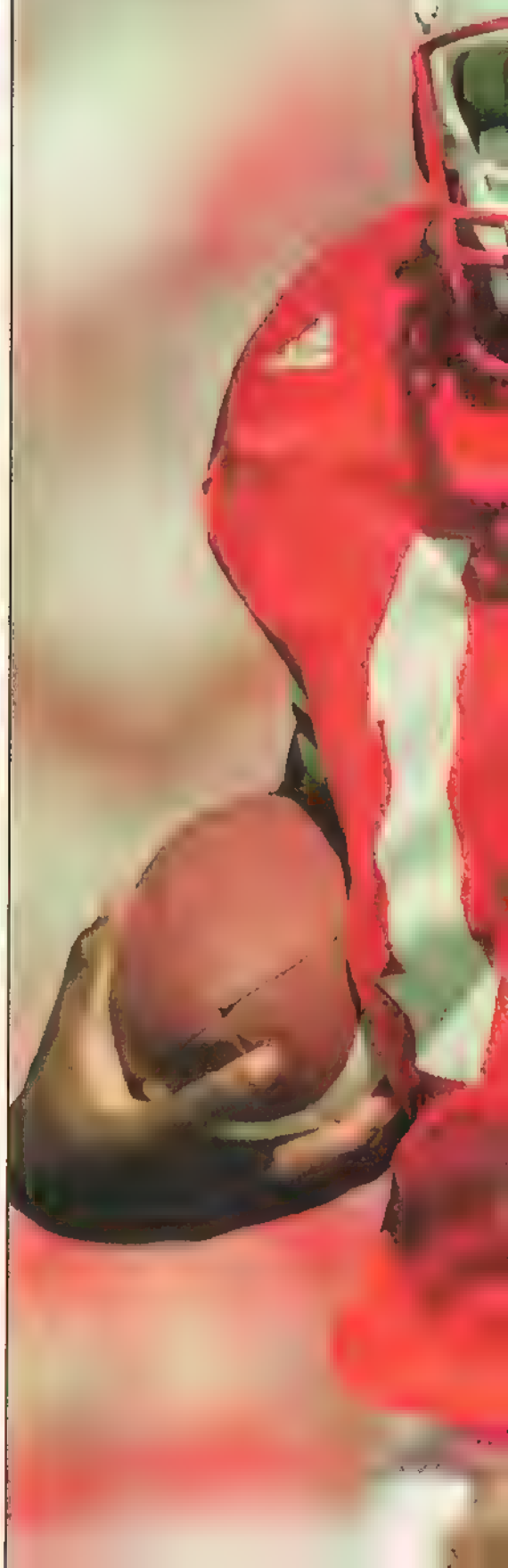


Eric Crouch:
It's his job to win.

Early Decision

***Story by Mike Babcock
Photos by Scott Bruhn***

**Bobby
Newcombe:**
It's his job to lose.





'Right now, that's how we're going to do it'

Frank Solich eliminated any suspense there might have been leading up to Nebraska's season-opener against Iowa at Iowa City during a media day interview in early August.

Barring something such as an injury, junior Bobby Newcombe is expected to start at quarterback against the Hawkeyes, Solich told reporters. There would be no waiting until the week of the game.

"At the end of spring, we indicated Bobby would be the No. 1 quarterback," said Solich.

And nothing had changed. The starting job was Newcombe's to lose, with Eric Crouch as backup.

"There are a lot of ways to put it," Solich said, attempting to temper his assertion.

"It's Eric's to win. It's Bobby's (to lose)," he said. "I don't know how you want to put it."

"But I guess that's fair. Right now, that's how we're going to do it."

There had been speculation during the summer that Solich might alternate Newcombe and Crouch in a two-quarterback system similar to the one used by Holiday Bowl opponent Arizona.

Solich acknowledged having considered such an approach. But "I would rather name a No. 1 guy," he said. And "they would rather have a No. 1 guy named. They've made that quite evident."

"I'm not saying that I would not feel comfortable with Eric and Bobby sharing time. But that's not what we plan on doing. That's not what they want done. That doesn't mean whoever is the second-team guy will not get any snaps. But there's not going to be any kind of rotation system set up."

"Just like any other position, we want a guy who's our starter to play the majority of the game."

Newcombe and Crouch each started six games last season, with Crouch getting an opportunity after Newcombe suffered a knee injury in

the third quarter of the opener against Louisiana Tech.

The injury, a torn posterior cruciate ligament, would eventually end Newcombe's season prematurely and be corrected by surgery, which would sideline him for all of spring practice.

The extended time off, though certainly unwanted and unappreciated, might be regarded as having a positive effect, Newcombe said, reiterating a point he tried to make in the spring.

"It's a blessing in disguise because it's a learning experience," he said.

"I've played football since I was in the fifth grade. I've done different kinds of sports, maybe rested for a weekend and then went right to basketball or something like that."

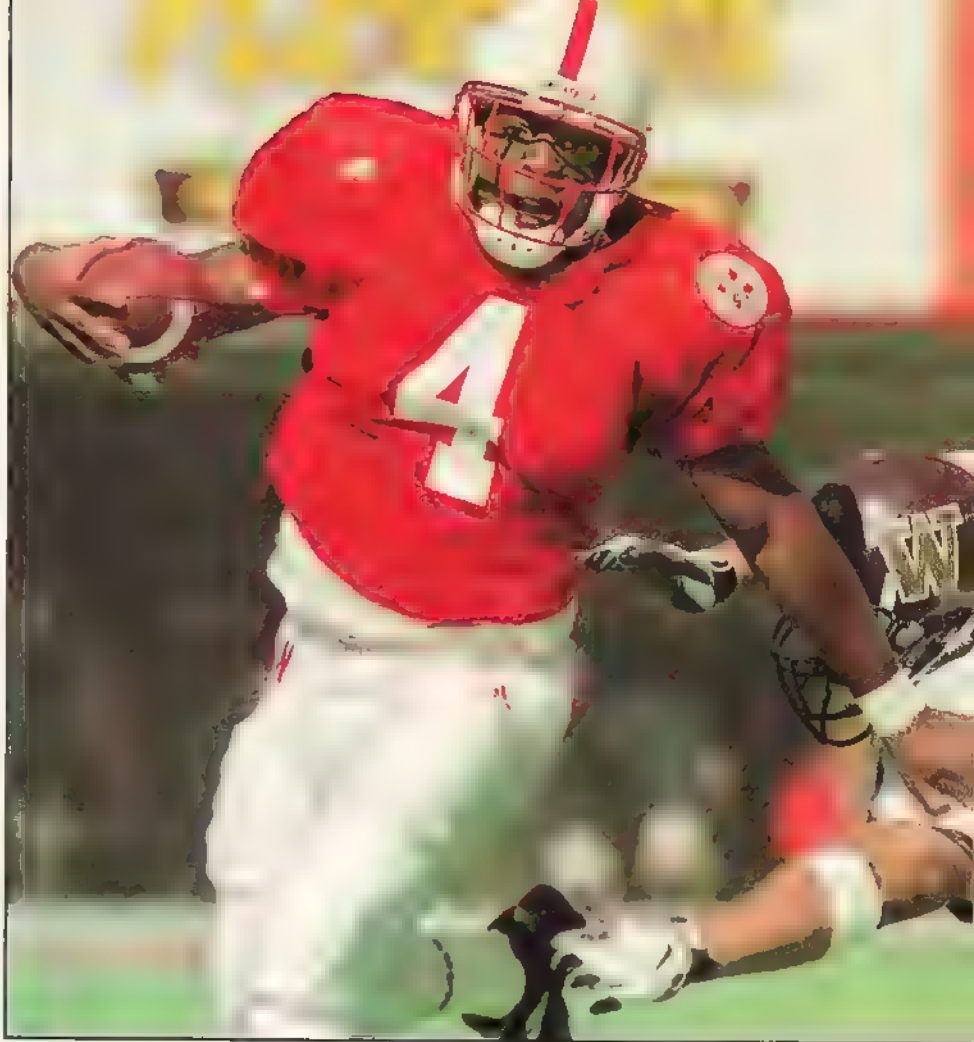
But late last season and during the spring, he could do little except rehabilitate the knee and watch his teammates, which he did. "My mind has never left the field at all," said Newcombe.

"Maybe my body has left the practices a little bit, but I've kept my mind into it all the way through. Every game last season I was either watching on TV or I was out there, right on the sideline.

"Every practice during spring practice I was there. And I watched every practice, every game, two or three times on (video)tape, if not more. So my mind was always into it."

No Cornhusker was more eager than Newcombe for two-a-day practices to begin in mid-August. "It's been about a year since I've been able to accelerate or sprint full-speed," he said.

"My love for the sport is tremendous, and to have that taken away from me and then having to work for it to play again, my passion for it has



The highlight of an otherwise forgettable season for DeAngelo Evans was a 146-yard, three-touchdown performance against Washington, one of three games in which he played.

developed 10 times more than last year."

Several other Cornhuskers who are coming off injuries that limited or sidelined them last season and during the spring were similarly enthusiastic about the start of fall camp, among them senior offensive tackle Adam

Julch and junior I-back DeAngelo Evans, both starters.

"This is the best I've felt in two years," Julch said after the first practice. Because of back and ankle problems, he played, by his estimate, at "about 65 or 70" percent last season.

Evans was able to play in only

Schwab Knee Injury Clouds Offensive Line Picture

Senior Jason Schwab, the returning starter at offensive right tackle, suffered torn ligaments in his right knee on the first day of practice in full pads and has been lost for the season.

The injury occurred during a pass-protection drill in Cook Pavilion.

"I think it affects the whole football team," said offensive line coach Milt Tenopir. "Schwabbie is a pretty special player, a pretty special guy. There wasn't anybody who could out-work him."

Schwab, who came from Eagan, Minn., as a walkon, started every game last season.

"It's a tough deal when you lose a kid of his caliber," said Tenopir. "There's probably nobody that's into the

game as much as Jason, I mean a guy that just truly loved football."

Schwab's starting position goes to Dave Volk, a sophomore from Battle Creek, Neb., who was the top backup at both right and left tackle. "Dave Volk will be fine," Tenopir said.

"He'll compete his tail off. Dave is solid. He is a real intelligent kid."

An immediate concern was identifying a swing tackle. The candidates included Kyle Kollmorgen and Leif Sidwell, as well as Nate Kolterman, who's coming off a knee injury and won't return to practice until early September. Guards Jon Rutherford and Toniau Fonoti also were to get a look at tackle ■

three games a year ago because of a knee injury, which he suffered in a preseason scrimmage, a toe injury and a bruised tailbone.

Like Newcombe, he was eager to get started. "I'm real excited," Evans told reporters at media day. "My face probably won't show it. I'm kind of tense. But I'm really ready to go.

"I really worked hard to get back from the injuries. I've been real impressed with how I've handled myself. It's been a tough time for me and my family. A lot of people close to me can tell you. But I want to be there for this team for 13 games. That's my goal, to be there for the long haul."

Evans said he wasn't concerned about those who might have questioned his determination to get back on the field. "I don't think it's something I'm frustrated with people about," he said.

"I think some people think I've come off as being frustrated about that. I'm not frustrated about it. That's just part of the game. That kind of comes with the territory. If you look at it in a different way, it's probably good because it means people expect a lot out of me."

Such expectations are easy to understand given Evans' performance when he has been healthy. Despite being hampered by a groin injury as a true freshman, he rushed for 776 yards and 14 touchdowns. And last season, he rushed for 146 yards and three touchdowns against Washington.

Cornhusker fans "want to see me out there," he said. "So I don't think I'm frustrated. I'm putting that all behind me. This is a new year. Like Prince said, I'm going to party like it's 1999.

"That's what I'm going to do this year."

Evans' attitude is characteristic of the team's, according to Newcombe, who seems comfortable with the leadership role a quarterback must assume. He sees "a lot of hunger, a lot of emotion," he said. "These guys want to get back in there and prove something after a 9-4 season.

"I could see a little bit of that hunger even during the end of last season, a little frustration here and there. And I saw a lot of determination over the summer, especially in the weight room.

"It hasn't been too many times I've been associated with a team that put so much emphasis in the weight room, getting bigger and getting stronger, and also getting smarter. This team was in the coaches' office watching a lot of film, making sure their

mind was set for this coming season."

Newcombe and Crouch both have dismissed the notion that the competition for the starting quarterback's job has become a personal matter between them.

"I've always looked at football as preparing myself to improve as an athlete and also as a leader, not necessarily to compete against another individual at a specific position," Newcombe said.

"I'm looking at it the same way this year."

Newcombe's concern is returning Nebraska to the national prominence it enjoyed when he was a freshman, and playing wingback, not competing

with Crouch.

In fact, the two quarterbacks help each other.

"I'm going to do everything I can to make sure he knows the offense really well so when he's playing, he can get in there and do the best he can," said Newcombe. "And he's going to do the same for me. We have the same goals for this team and that's to dominate every game and win a national championship.


"He wants to start real bad. I want to start real bad."

If he stays healthy, Newcombe will get that opportunity against Iowa.

The job is his to lose. Or however you want to put it. ■

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1999 Nebraska Fall Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown (school)	No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown (school)
98	Demoine Adams	RR	6-2	225	Fr	Pine Bluff, Ark.		Kyle Larson	P	6-0	165	Fr	Funk (Kearney)
17	Scott Agugre	SE	6-2	200	Jr	Lincoln (Southeast)		Cal Lemelle	RCB	5-9	165	Fr	Hillsborough, N.J.
41	Matt Albertson	IB	5-10	195	Fr	North Platte		Tim Liley	WB	6-2	195	Fr	Lakewood, Colo.
38	Dan Alexander	IB	6-0	245	Jr	Wentzville, Mo.		Jack Limbaugh	OG	6-4	260	Fr	Argona, Iowa
64	Steve Alstadt	OG	6-5	275	So.	Fort Calhoun		Brett Lindstrom	SE	6-0	170	Fr	Omaha (Millard West)
	Blake Anderson	WLB	6-0	215	Fr	Lincoln (Southeast)	29	Gregg List	ROV	5-11	220	Sr	Valentine
28	Josh Anderson	JCB	5-8	175	Jr	Wahoo	70	Jason Lohr	NT	6-2	275	So	Tulsa, Okla.
82	Sean Applegate	WB	5-9	185	Sr	Lincoln (High)		1 Frankie London	WB	5-11	170	Sr	Lake Charles, La.
41	Rod Baker	SLB	6-0	225	Jr	Hastings (Adams Central)	28	Chace Long	PK	6-1	195	Jr	Wahoo
51	Matt Baldwin	C	6-2	285	Sr	Arvada, Colo.	71	Chris Loos	OG	6-3	300	Fr	Lincoln (Southeast)
94	Damien Bauman	TE	6-3	260	Sr	Auburndale, Fla.	10	Jammal Lord	QB	6-3	195	Fr	Bayonne, N.J.
81	Jeremy Bender	WB	5-11	185	Fr	Lincoln (Northeast)	86	Jeremy Lyman	RR	6-2	210	Fr	Salt Lake City, Utah
20	Tom Beveridge	SE	6-0	190	Jr	Sutherland		Mike Makris	MLB	6-1	235	Fr	Rhineander
58	Ryon Bingham	DT	6-3	270	Fr	Sandy, Utah		John Mangelsdorf	OT	6-6	300	Fr	St. Louis, Mo.
12	Rob Blomeier	FS	5-11	185	Fr	Lilitz, Pa.	94	Stephen Manning	NT	6-1	235	Fr	Knoxville, Tenn.
4	Mike Boatner	ROV	6-0	200	Fr.	Omaha (Millard North)	33	Dwayne McCarty	CB	6-0	185	Jr.	Rochester, N.Y.
14	Dion Booker	FS	6-1	205	So.	Oceanside, Calif.	70	Matt McGinn	NT	6-1	280	So	Anse mo
84	Jon Bowling	TE	6-3	240	Fr	Lincoln (Southeast)		Luke McGowen	SE	5-11	165	Fr	Schuyler
	Andy Bowman	NT	6-3	285	Fr	York (Benedict)	32	Greg McGraw	FS	6-3	200	Sr	Millville, N.J.
26	Josh Brown	K	6-2	185	Fr	Foyil, Okla.	90	Jake McKee	TE	6-2	230	Jr	Good and, Kan.
21	Mike Brown	ROV	5-10	205	Sr	Scottsdale, Ariz.	11	Robin Miller	IB	5-11	220	Fr	Kent, Wash.
22	Ralph Brown II	RCB	5-10	180	Sr	Hacienda Heights, Calif.		Tim Miller	WLB	6-1	195	Fr	Elmwood
	Brad Bryan	SLB	6-1	205	Fr	Norman, Okla.	15	Whe Miller	FB	6-1	240	Jr	Omaha (Bellevue West)
36	Correll Buckhalter	IB	6-0	220	Jr	Collins, Miss.	93	Brandon Mooberry	LR	6-5	245	Jr	Lexington
39	Ben Buettanback	MLB	5-11	220	Sr	Hastings	7	Chris Moran	RCB	5-11	180	Jr	Frederick, Md.
	Chad Buller	IB	6-0	200	Fr	Henderson	43	John Murphy	TE	6-3	260	Jr	Crawford
48	Jamie Burrow	MLB	6-1	235	So	Ames, Iowa	35	Don Neal	RCB	5-6	150	Fr	Henrietta, N.Y.
31	Chris Butler	IB	5-11	200	Fr	Hoover, Ala.		Brian Nelson	OT	6-4	300	Fr	Omaha (Millard West)
11	Joe Chrisman	QB	5-11	190	Fr	Longmont, Colo.	87	Casey Nelson	DT	6-1	270	So.	Newman Grove
55	Jon Clanton	NT	6-2	270	Fr	Glendale, Ariz.	62	Jeff Nelson	NT	6-7	285	Fr	Superior
59	Wes Cody	OG	6-2	275	Fr	Fremont (Bergan)	12	Bobby Newcombe	QB	6-0	195	Jr	Albuquerque, N.M.
93	Kelly Cook	SE	6-1	190	Fr	Omaha (Burke)		Ryan Ormert	SE	5-11	175	Fr	Cambridge
86	Ben Cornelison	WB	5-10	175	So	Shawnee, Kan.	37	Tony Ortiz	SLB	6-1	220	Sr	New York, N.Y.
52	Jon Coyne	MLB	6-4	220	So	Omaha (Westside)	84	Spencer Owen	RR	6-5	235	Fr	Carrollton, Mo.
3	Keyuo Craver	LCB	5-10	190	So	Harleton, Texas	78	Phil Peetz	NT	6-2	245	Fr	Elkhorn
7	Eric Crouch	QB	6-1	195	So	Omaha (Millard North)	44	Jon Penny	SLB	6-1	225	So	Lawrence, Kan.
91	Will Dabbert	TE	6-4	240	Fr	Lincoln (East)	14	Jeff Perino	QB	6-2	215	Sr	Durango, Colo.
34	Judd Davies	FB	6-1	235	Fr	Omaha (Millard North)		Chad Peterson	NT	6-5	265	Fr	Elmwood
21	Josh Davis	WB	5-11	190	Fr	Love and, Colo.	37	Hank Piening	FB	6-2	215	Jr	Midford
3	Matt Davison	SE	6-1	180	Jr	Tecumseh	12	Jarrel Pappens	FS	6-2	180	Fr	Philadelphia, Pa.
74	Jon Dawson	C	6-2	285	Fr	Chayenne, Wyo.		Kevin Pills	FB	6-0	230	Fr	Brookfield, Mo.
2	DeBates	TE	6-3	250	Sr	Stewartville, Minn.		Matt Plooster	WB	5-11	175	Fr	Malcolm (Mt. Michael)
2	Mike Demps	RCB	5-10	195	Fr	Fort Worth, Texas	13	Carlos Polk	MLB	6-2	175	Jr	Rockford, Ill.
30	Dahran Dendrick	IB	6-0	215	Fr	Scarborough, Ontario	10	Brandon Quindt	ROV	5-11	200	Jr	Scottsbluff
76	Billy Diekmann	OT	6-3	290	Jr	Cheney (Norris)	54	Dominic Racio	C	6-2	295	So	Honolulu, Hawaii
	Chris Estudio	RR	6-4	230	Fr	Ord	31	Tyler Rauenzahn	LCB	5-9	200	Fr	Colorado Springs, Colo.
4	DeAngelo Evans	IB	5-9	215	Jr	Wichita, Kan.	23	Steve Raymond	SLB	5-11	215	Sr	Gering
2	Mark Evans	FB	5-10	230	Fr	Donna, Texas		Tim Reese	IB	6-1	244	Fr	Seattle, Wash.
	Lee Fice	RR	6-5	255	Fr	Beloit, Kan.	8	Pat Rickerts	RCB	5-11	165	Fr	Omaha (Millard North)
19	Clint Finley	FS	6-0	175	Jr	Cedar, Texas	85	Kyle Ringenberg	RR	6-4	230	Fr	Elkhorn
38	Eric Fischer	ROV	5-11	200	Jr.	Leigh	18	Jay Runly	QB	6-0	205	Jr	Elkhorn
77	Toni Fonoti	OG	6-4	300	Fr	Hauula, Hawaii	66	Jon Rutherford	OG	6-3	295	So	Midwest City, Okla.
14	Austin Forster	WB	5-9	185	Fr	Gordon	80	Eric Ryan	RR	6-1	235	So	Overton
58	Gabe Fries	WLB	6-2	225	Fr	Benke man	79	Chris Saalfeld	OG	6-3	280	Jr	North Bend
74	John Garrison	LR	6-5	265	Fr	Blue Springs, Mo.		Steve Safraneck	MLB	6-2	200	Fr	Omaha (Gross)
1	Taylor Gehman	ROV	5-11	190	Fr	Omaha (Northwest)	11	Carl Schotting	FS	6-0	200	Fr	Springfield
8	John Gibson	WB	6-0	180	Jr	Papillion	49	Scott Shanley	SLB	6-2	225	Fr	St. Edward
99	Aaron Goliday	TE	6-4	270	Fr	York		Ronjel Sharpe	LCB	6-0	200	Fr	Montgomery, Ala.
46	Nick Gragert	FB	5-11	220	So.	Columbus	46	Brian Shaw	SLB	6-1	220	Fr	Deweese (Sandy Creek)
70	Mike Green	OG	6-4	290	So	Omaha (Westside)	63	James Sherman	OG	6-4	295	Sr	LaVerne, Calif.
	Tim Green	OT	6-5	305	Fr	Omaha (Westside)	53	Matt Shook	C	6-2	270	Fr	Medina, Ohio
6	DeAntae Grixby	IB	5-8	200	Fr	Omaha (Central)	72	Leif Siewer	OT	6-5	280	Fr	Kearney
5	DeJuan Groce	LCB	5-10	190	Fr	Gerrard Heights, Ohio		Stuart Siegel	WB	6-0	200	Fr	Grand Island
97	Matt Grummerl	LR	6-2	235	Jr	Fairbury	56	Jeremy Slechta	DT	6-6	280	So	Lavista
	Kevin Guse	LCB	6-1	170	Fr	Longmont, Colo.	92	Justin Smith	LR	6-4	250	Fr	Sherman, Texas
92	Seth Gutz	SE	6-1	190	Jr	Columbus	40	Luke Smith	MLB	6-1	230	Fr.	York
61	Andy Gwennap	OG	6-2	275	Fr	Smith Center, Kan.		Sean Steenson	TE	6-7	235	Fr	Council Bluffs (Al.)
17	Dan Hadenfeldt	P	5-11	195	Sr	Des Moines, Iowa	34	Randy Stella	WLB	6-0	205	Fr	Omaha (Benson)
	Brian Hale	OT	6-4	265	Fr	Omaha (Gross)		Dan Swantex	OG	6-1	280	So	Omaha (Gross)
45	Brad Hamik	FS	6-0	185	Jr	Hawarden, Iowa	16	Erwin Swiney	LCB	6-0	185	Jr	Lincoln (Northeast)
18	Troy Hassebroek	WB	6-4	220	Fr	Lincoln (High)	88	Chuck Tack	PK	6-5	215	So	Omaha (Millard South)
78	Aaron Havlovic	C	6-4	280	Sr	Osceola	99	Junior Tagoa'i	NT	6-3	290	Fr	Hauula, Hawaii
18	Jeff Hemje	RCB	6-0	185	So	Grand Island	90	Tony Tata	MLB	6-1	240	Fr	Honolulu, Hawaii
80	Larry Henderson	SE	6-1	190	Sr	Los Angeles, Calif.	8	Aaron Terpening	FS	5-11	185	Fr	North Salem, Ore.
10	Dan Hennings	SE	6-0	195	Fr	Omaha (Westside)	9	Wilson Thomas	SE	6-5	210	Fr	Omaha (North)
55	Russ Hochstein	OG	6-3	280	Jr	Hartington (Cedar Cath.)		Fred Thorne	SE	5-10	175	Fr	Lincoln (Southeast)
	Anthony Hoke	SLB	6-1	195	Fr	Lyndon, Kan.	24	Alek Tillery	B	5-10	200	So	Brussels, Belgium
32	Casey Hughes	FB	6-1	220	Fr	Scotia	35	Tyrene Jhirr	FB	6-0	235	Fr	Battle Creek
24	Matt Ickes	LCB	5-10	205	So	Page	83	Kyle Vanden Bosch	RR	6-4	270	Jr	Larchwood, Iowa
50	Julius Jackson	WLB	6-1	240	Sr	Ga nesville, Texas		Chuck Vander Linden	SLB	6-1	210	Fr	Golden Valley, Minn.
	Banarch Johnson	WLB	6-0	200	Fr	Omaha (St. Albert)	9	Mark Vedral	WLB	5-11	210	So	Gregory, S.D.
27	Eric Johnson	WLB	6-1	205	Sr	Phoenix, Ariz.		Cody Volk	OT	6-7	285	Fr	Battle Creek
88	Trevor Johnson	TE	6-5	225	Fr	Lincoln (Northeast)	58	Dave Volk	OT	6-5	275	So	Battle Creek
69	Adam Julch	OT	6-5	320	Sr	Omaha (Burke)	68	Dan Waldrop	OT	6-5	320	Jr	Wilmington, Calif.
94	Patrick Kabongo	LR	6-6	315	Fr	Montreal, Quebec	25	Joe Walker	FS	5-10	195	Jr	Arlington, Texas
91	Loran Kaiser	DT	6-4	290	Jr	Farwell (St. Paul)	96	Steve Warren	NT	6-2	315	Fr	Springfield, Mo.
40	Pau Kast	FB	5-10	220	Fr	Lincoln (Pius X)	82	Adrian Warrior	LR	6-5	240	Sr	Bloomfield
57	Chris Kelsay	LR	6-5	255	Fr	Auburn	42	Troy Watchorn	ROV	5-11	200	Jr	Columbus
22	Ben Kingston	FB	6-1	240	Sr	Omaha (Westside)	95	J.P. Wichmann	RR	6-4	220	So.	Shawnee, Kan.
21	John Klem	WB	6-0	200	Fr	Lincoln (East)	5	Shevin Wiggins	WB	5-11	200	Fr	Palmetto, Fla.
68	Scott Koethe	OT	6-5	320	Fr	Central City	62	Mike Wilford	OT	6-3	300	Fr	Stevensville, Md.
47	Josh Kohl	WLB	6-1	230	Sr	Hastings	1	Donn Williams	LCB	5-9	180	Fr	Clemmons, N.C.
75	Kyle Kolmorgen	OT	6-5	290	So.	Lincoln (Southeast)	81	Aaron Wils	LR	6-2	250	Sr	Omaha (Burke)
71	David Kolowski	C	6-4	285	Fr	Omaha (Millard West)	88	Colin Wils	LR	6-1	240	Fr	Omaha (Burke)
67	Nate Kolterman	OT	6-3	310	Fr	Seward		Tracey Wistrom	TE	6-5	220	So	Webb City, Mo.
95	Paul Kosch	WB	5-10	190	Fr	Humphrey (St. Francis)		Matt Wutski	OG	6-3	290	Fr	Love and, Ohio
							20	Wes Woodward	ROV	5-8	180	So.	Omaha (Cr. Prep)

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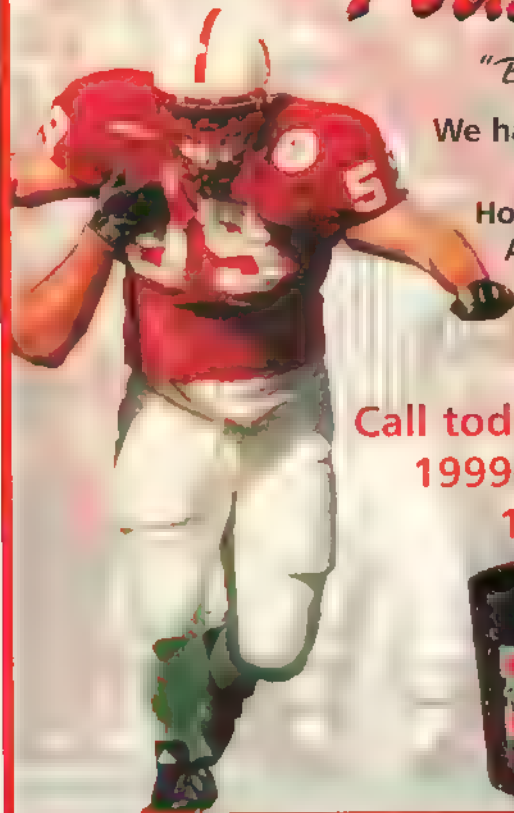
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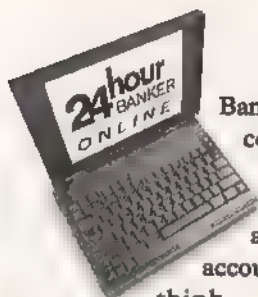
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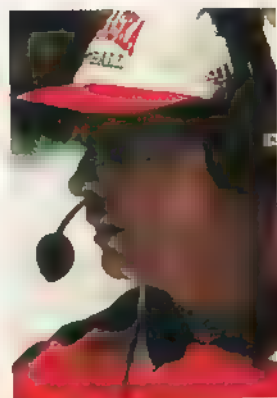


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Hawkeye Offense One Big Mystery

Injuries, suspensions leave Iowa shorthanded for season-opener against Nebraska

By Mike Finn, Voice of the Hawkeyes

If there was one mystery to Coach Kirk Ferentz's first Iowa football team, it had to be the Hawkeye offense that lost much of its offensive line that ranked dead last in the Big Ten during Hayden Fry's final season in 1998.

That mystery became even larger before his troops even reported to camp the first week of August as four more line-

men saw their seasons end from injuries while two other Hawkeyes on offense were suspended for breaking team rules.

The injured trenchmen are junior Ben Sobieski, who started all 11 games at left tackle in 1998, senior Matt Rogers, who started four games at right tackle and juniors Matt Markway and Kyle Trippier, who both moved from tight end to offensive line last spring.

Without those four and graduated starters Derek Rose at center and Matt Reischl at guard, Ferentz returns just two players, Chad Deal (who moved from left guard to center) and Alonzo Cunningham (who started six games at right tackle) who have any varsity experience.

Ferentz, the former offensive line coach at Iowa (1981-89) and with Cleveland/Baltimore (1992-98) in the NFL, will look for Deal and fellow senior Jay Bickford, (projected starter at left guard) to rally the ground troops.

"Both these guys performed well in the spring and did an excellent job of giving leadership and working hard," Ferentz said.

"It's a circle the wagon type of thing," Bickford said. "Our backs are against the wall."

Deal said he is not worried about facing a Nebraska defense that allowed just 116 rushing yards per game in 1998.

"Our offensive line can't come out with a worried concept," said Deal, the Council Bluffs, Iowa, native who also has played tackle during his career. "We just need to go out and hit, but that can't happen until you know your technique. When that comes, you just don't think about it and do it."


Iowa actually returns nearly all its skilled-position players from 1998, but two of those will not be present for the Nebraska game: senior quarterback

Randy Reiners (suspended for one game after being charged for public intoxication this summer) and sophomore wide receiver Kahlil Hill (suspended for the season after breaking unspecified team rules).

Reiners was expected to challenge for the starting spot after throwing for 521 yards and three touchdowns in four starts in 1998, while Hill led Iowa in receiving (35 for 432 yards and two scores), punt returns (17.7) and kickoff returns (25.8), scoring three more touchdowns on returns.

New offensive coordinator Ken O'Keefe, who is expected to open up

NEBRASKA (0-0) VS IOWA (0-0)



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Kinnick Stadium • Iowa City, Iowa

Tentative 2 Deeps

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

SE	3	Matt Davison**	6-1	180	Jr
	9	Wilson Thomas	6-5	210	Fr
LT	69	Adam Julch***	6-5	320	Sr
	58	Dave Volk*	6-5	295	So
LG	63	James Sherman***	6-4	295	So
	64	Steve Alstadt	6-5	275	So
C	54	Dominic Rea**	6-2	295	So
	51	Matt Baldwin**	6-2	285	Sr
RG	55	Russ Hochstein**	6-3	280	Jr
	66	Jon Rutherford*	6-3	295	So
RT	58	Dave Volk*	6-5	295	So
	78	Kyle Kilmorgan*	6-5	290	So
TE	85	T.J. DeBates***	6-3	250	Sr
-or-	87	Tracey Wistrom	6-5	220	So
QB	12	Bobby Newcombe**	6-0	185	Jr
-or-	7	Eric Crouch*	6-1	195	So
FB	15	Willie Miller**	6-1	240	Jr
	22	Ben Kingston**	6-1	240	Sr
IB	4	DeAngelo Evans**	5-9	275	Jr
	38	Dan Alexander**	6-0	245	Jr
WB	5	Shawn Wiggins***	5-11	200	Sr
	82	Sean Applegate**	5-8	185	Sr
PK	26	Josh Brown	6-2	185	Fr

Tentative 2 Deeps

Iowa Defense

16	Anthony Herron**
16	Cody O'Hare*
63	Jerry Montgomery
3	Skip Miller
31	Ed Seld
3	Scott Pospisil
23	LeVar Wondol
23	Jon Omori
MLB 55	Aaron Kamman*
54	Roger Mayer
WL 51	Yamon Holmes
	Derrick Davison
	Joe Stetter

	Terio Holmer
	Mikkel Brown
	Jason Baker**

IOWA OFFENSE

WR	5	Kevin Kasper*	6-1	190	Jr
	36	Cris Oliver*	6-3	194	So
LT	74	A. Cunningham*	6-4	283	So
	70	Andy Lightfoot	6-7	275	Fr
LG	63	Jay Bickford*	6-4	283	Sr
	76	B.J. Van Briesen	6-3	300	Fr
C	67	Chad Deal**	6-5	285	Sr
	52	A.J. Blazek	6-1	276	Jr
RG	92	Bruce Nelson	6-5	270	Fr
	78	Kyle Trippier	6-5	260	Jr
RT	73	David Porter	6-8	290	So
	70	Andy Lightfoot	6-7	275	Fr
TE	80	Zaron Flemister*	6-5	240	Sr
	86	Austin Wheatley**	6-5	250	So
QB	4	Kyle McCann*	6-5	190	So
	18	Scott Mullen*	6-5	210	Jr
FL	5	Bashir Yamini*	6-4	190	Sr
	88	Ryan Barton*	6-1	184	Jr
RB	46	Ladell Betts*	5-11	204	So
	15	Robbie Crockett	6-0	202	So
FB	31	Rob Thel**	6-0	230	Sr
	47	Jeremy Allen*	6-1	233	So
PK	17	Tim Douglas*	5-11	195	Sr

PICKS

Brian Hill
Editor

Nebraska 37, Iowa 10

With a new coach and system, Iowa might have some tricks up its sleeve but not nearly enough. Nebraska's players and coaches act like they can't wait to get it going.

Mike Babcock
Contributing Editor
Nebraska 31, Iowa 7

The Cornhuskers' offense might need a little time to work off the rust. Whether Nebraska gets a shutout likely will depend on how well the reserves do in the fourth quarter.

Terry Douglass
Grand Island Independent
Sports Editor
Nebraska 34, Iowa 14

The Cornhuskers are hungry and looking to send an early message to start the 1999 season off on a positive note.

Chuck Stevens
Lincoln KFOR Radio
Sports Director
Nebraska 35, Iowa 10

This group is hungry again. They just might do it.

Mike Finn
Voice of the Hawkeyes
Editor
Nebraska 31, Iowa 7

The first half will be close and Iowa's defense could surprise the Huskers but by the second half Nebraska's experience and depth could overwhelm the young Iowa offense, especially if it is a hot day in Iowa City.

O'Keefe said it is important that Iowa does not get too focused on the season opener vs. the Cornhuskers.

"Some people ask me what do I think about having Nebraska as our first test. I said, 'First test? It sounds like the final exam.' " said O'Keefe. "Our players are looking forward to it. When they go into that stadium, they want to play the best. We need to stay focused on our own improvement and progress."

SO WHO WILL QUARTERBACK?

With Reiners on the sidelines for at least one game, Ferentz will most likely choose between sophomore Kyle McCann (who led Iowa with 1,179 passing yards and two scores in five starts) and junior Scott Mullen (who threw for 311 yards and one touchdown in two starts before breaking his collarbone against Ohio State last season).

McCann, who was sacked 11 times against Ohio State, said he has tried to improve his mobility.

"Physically, I feel a lot stronger, more durable with a little more speed," McCann said. "The bottom line is that you have to produce. Hopefully, my future years are brighter than the past."

There also is an obvious physical change to Mullen, who put on 10 more pounds of muscle.

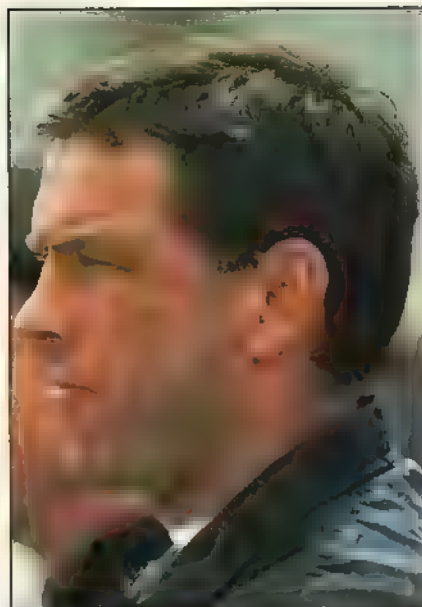
Mullen said the key to being successful at quarterback will depend on "who's more relaxed and confident," he said. "It's knowing that ball is going to get there, no matter what. I always had the arm strength and size."

Drew Brees of Purdue has proven that successful quarterbacks don't need to have tremendous physical qualities.

"You want that guy who has the judgment that will allow him to make great decisions that can result in big plays," O'Keefe said. "He doesn't have to be superhuman. If you look at championship-caliber quarterbacks, they come in all kinds of shapes, forms and personalities. There isn't one prototype."

MINORED LOOK AT TIGHT END

During Fry's 20 years at the Iowa helm, the Hawkeye tight end stood out because he usually stood up while his teammates



Iowa's new coach is Kirk Ferentz, assistant head coach and offensive line coach of the Baltimore Ravens for six years.

lined up in a three-point stance.

But while that position produced former all-Big Ten players like Marv Cook, Mike Titley and Alan Cross, Iowa's tight ends were non-existent last year as that position collected just 20 of Iowa's 153 receptions.

That number, as well as how the tight end lines up, is expected to change, as Ferentz has mentioned that his most experienced players are at tight end, seniors Zeron Flemister and Austin Wheatley.

Neither would be surprised if Iowa utilized a double tight end look.

"We have plays that focus on people's strengths," Wheatley said. "If you are fast and can out-run the defense, you are going to get long balls. If you are quick and can elude the corners, you are going to get the short balls."

Flemister said he and Wheatley possess both strengths.

"Austin has a few more things he can do with the ball, and he's a little quicker," said Flemister, who scored the only tight end touchdown in 1998. "He's got his own little moves, while I'm not much of a juker. I like to make one cut, then go to the goal line."

A LONG DAY AGAINST THE HUSKERS IN 1982

Iowa, which trails in the series 24-12-3, has not played the Huskers since 1982, when Nebraska won 42-7 in Lincoln.

Chuck Long, Iowa's former Heisman Trophy runner-up and current Hawkeye quarterback coach, has plenty of memories of that last Hawkeye-Husker encounter, but few of them are pleasant.

"I remember it was a hot day and I ate everything in sight during the pregame meal," said Long, recalling the first game of his redshirt freshman season. "During the third quarter, I called timeout because I wasn't feeling too good. (Coach Fry) started yelling at me because I called timeout, and we were getting killed and he wanted the clock to run. I proceeded to throw up all over his brand new white shoes on the sideline. He was so mad that he kicked me out of the game right at that spot."

"I was benched the next game, and I don't know if it was my bad play or the fact that I threw up on him."

Iowa's offense more, plans on keeping it simple at first.

"You want to be simple," O'Keefe said. "NASA's not going to show up here looking for ideas. This is football and still a game played by young people. The old adage is not what you know but what you communicate. We have to let our young players develop fundamentals and skills they need to perform at their position. A lot gets lost when they focus on the end result, not on the process of improvement."

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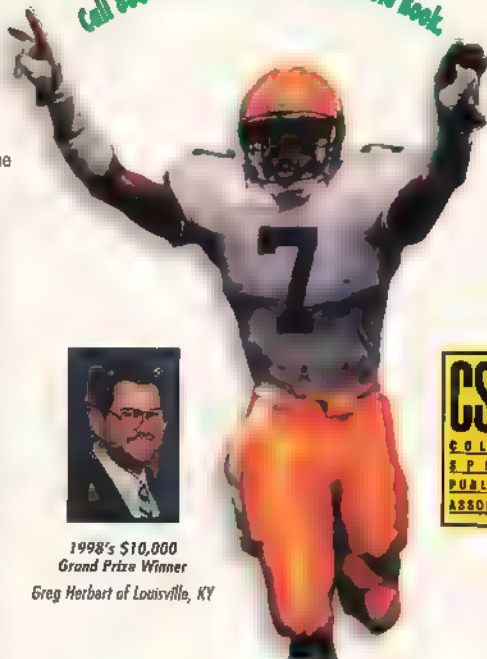
Bonus Points (Defense)

Passing Yards under 100 = 5 points
Rushing Yards under 100 = 5 points
Every Sack = 1 point
Every Interception = 1 point

Bonus Points (Team)

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Loss = 5 points
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1 Georgia Tech.....\$1,870,000	1 Ohio.....\$760,000	1 Washington.....\$1,170,000
1 Idaho.....\$1,135,000	1 Ohio State.....\$2,255,000	1 West Virginia.....\$1,110,000
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ROLLINS RETURNS

Among the missing starters from Iowa's 1998 defense is linebacker Matt Hughes, who ranked second with 89 tackles. But Iowa could replace experience with experience if Vernon Rollins, a former USA-Today prep all-American, can produce during an NCAA-permitted sixth year.

Rollins, who started every game during the 1995 and 1996 seasons and ranks 26th on Iowa's all-time tackles list with 237 stops, has not played a down since the third game of 1997 when he tore up his knee against Iowa State.

"Vernon has been working extremely hard from Day One," Ferentz said. "He wants very badly to be part of this football team. Vernon is a proven football player, but also a proven leader. If we can just find a role for him. None of us are looking at him being out there 60 some plays in any game this fall. That is probably unrealistic. But he can be dressed and give us something in certain situations."

Rollins, who already received a degree in education and is working on a second major, credited linebacker coach Bret Bielema for returning for a sixth year.

"There have been a couple of times when I wanted to leave, and it's just I'm glad I stayed," Rollins said.

Rollins' return will also help true sophomore Aaron Kampman take over the leadership role on defense. Kampman, considered a clone of former Nebraska linebacker Trev Alberts (who grew up nearby in Cedar Falls from Kampman's Aplington-Parkersburg High School) started the final two games of 1998 and still ranked seventh in total tackles (49), despite sitting out the first two games as a potential redshirt.

"It's just a big bonus to have (Rollins) out here and to have him in uniform," said Kampman, who will switch from No. 55 to his former prep No. 54 this season. "I've heard Coach Ferentz use the word warrior, and that describes Vernon."

NEW LOOK UP FRONT

When people talk about Iowa's new defensive look up front, they are referring to new defensive coordinator Norm Parker's 4-3 defense and the fact that there are three new faces in the starting lineup.

Defensive tackles Jerry Montgomery and Corey Brown will join fellow newcomer and defensive end Anthony Herron on a 5-2 front that lost all-American Jared DeVries from a year ago.

"We want four guys who are bangers," said defensive line coach Ron Aiken. "Our goal is to knock (the opposing line) back. If we penetrate low, we separate the offensive line and make plays."

The only returning starter is senior Ed Saidat at defensive tackle.

"He's definitely not the kind of guy who is shouting all the time," Herron said. "He's definitely a leader where people follow by example." ■

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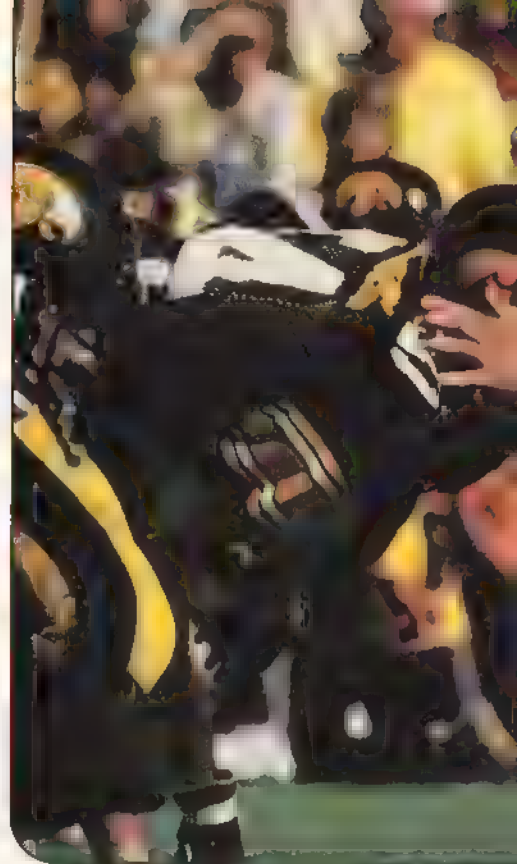
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Border Wars

Loss at Iowa City in '81 opener led to rare 1-2 start

By Mike Babcock



Nebraska leads series 24-12-3

Year	Result	Location
1891	Iowa 22-0	Omaha
1892	Tie 10-10	Omaha
1893	Nebraska 20-18	Omaha
1894	Nebraska 36-0	Omaha
1895	Nebraska 6-0	Omaha
1896	Tie 0-0	Omaha
	Iowa 6-0	Omaha
1897	Nebraska 6-0	Council Bluffs
1898	Iowa 6-5	Council Bluffs
1899	Iowa 30-0	Omaha
1903	Nebraska 17-6	Iowa City
1904	Nebraska 17-6	Lincoln
1908	Nebraska 11-8	Iowa City
1909	Tie 6-6	Lincoln
1913	Nebraska 12-0	Lincoln
1914	Nebraska 16-7	Iowa City
1915	Nebraska 52-7	Lincoln

Nearly 20 years have passed. But vague images remain.

"The one thing that stands out in my mind, of course, is that we lost," Jeff Krejci said recently.

Krejci is the president of the First State Bank of Hickman (Neb.) But he was a senior and the starting free safety on the Nebraska football team on the day in question in 1981.

The Cornhuskers, ranked seventh in the nation by the Associated Press, lost to Iowa in the season-opener at Iowa City. The difference in the game was small. The final score was 10-7.

Nebraska fell behind 10-0 at half-time on a hot and humid afternoon, before what was at the time a record crowd at Kinnick Stadium of 60,160, and could manage only a touchdown by junior I-back Roger Craig from 1 yard away early in the fourth quarter.

Craig was among four Nebraska starters from Iowa. The others were tight end Jamie Williams, Craig's high school teammate, defensive tackle Henry Waechter and linebacker Steve



Jeff Krejci was Nebraska's starting free safety in 1981.

McWhirter.

Though he wasn't a starter and didn't play a lot for the Hawkeyes, Omaha's Bryan Skradis made the tackle on the opening kickoff and set the emotional tone for the game.

The Cornhuskers tried in vain to come back.

Although the defense did its part,

limiting Iowa to 197 yards, Krejci felt personally responsible. And still does. In the second half, the Hawkeyes completed a pass, which he almost intercepted, to keep a drive alive. "I've lived with that for 18 years," said Krejci. "If I could have just caught it."

The Pete Gales pass completion didn't produce points. It did delay the return to the field of Nebraska's offense, however, and time was becoming precious as the second half wore on.



1916	Nebraska 34-17	Iowa City
1917	Nebraska 47-0	Lincoln
1918	Iowa 12-0	Lincoln
1919	Iowa 18-0	Iowa City
1930	Iowa 12-7	Iowa City
1931	Nebraska 7-0	Lincoln
1932	Nebraska 14-13	Iowa City
1933	Nebraska 7-6	Lincoln
1934	Nebraska 14-13	Lincoln
1937	Nebraska 28-0	Lincoln
1938	Nebraska 14-0	Iowa City
1940	Nebraska 14-6	Lincoln
1941	Nebraska 14-13	Lincoln
1942	Iowa 27-0	Iowa City
1943	Iowa 33-13	Lincoln
1944	Iowa 27-6	Iowa City
1945	Nebraska 13-6	Lincoln
1946	Iowa 21-7	Iowa City
1979	Nebraska 24-21	Iowa City
1980	Nebraska 57-0	Lincoln
1981	Iowa 10-7	Iowa City
1982	Nebraska 42-7	Lincoln

"We needed to get the ball back," Krejci said.

For a split second it appeared he had intercepted the pass. But "the ball went right through my hands," he said, adding that he turned and saw the receiver on the ground with the ball, and also caught a glimpse of Coach Tom Osborne "jumping in the air, until he realized that I didn't have the ball."

Gales finished the game with seven completions in 11 attempts, for only 28

yards. If not for the running of sophomore tailback Eddie Phillips, the Hawkeyes would have had no offense.

Nebraska's offense was similarly ineffective, gaining a season-low 234 total yards, fueling a quarterback controversy involving senior Mark Mauer and sophomores Nate Mason and Turner Gill. Mauer started and Mason also played. Gill made the trip but didn't see action.

Krejci's recollection of the last time Nebraska played at Iowa City includes "the crowd noise" at Kinnick Stadium. The fans "were right on top of you, and it was so difficult to communicate," he said. "They were right there on the sideline, about like they were looking down on you."

"That's how it felt, anyway. The sideline was so close."

The victory was the first of eight in 1981 for third-year Coach Hayden Fry's Hawkeyes, who would go on to represent the Big Ten in the Rose Bowl game — losing to Washington 28-0.

The winning season was Iowa's first since 1961.

The victory also was a payback for a 57-0 loss to Nebraska at Lincoln the previous season. After that game, Fry said that Osborne had been unethical in preparing for the Hawkeyes, obtaining and studying game films from when he had been the head coach at North Texas State.

After the victory, Fry claimed he had not charged Osborne with unethical conduct. Rather, he said, he was "disappointed with North Texas State" for having provided Nebraska with the films.

He and his staff left North Texas State "in damn good shape," he said. "Then they want to Nebraska to beat us (by offering the films). I didn't mention the film thing one time."

The Cornhuskers recovered from the Iowa loss to defeat Florida State 34-14. But whatever comfort there might have been in that quickly faded with a 30-24 loss to Penn State in Lincoln.

The Nittany Lions, with Curt Warner rushing for 238 yards, scored the final 10 points.

At halftime, Nebraska linebackers coach John Melton told the defense, "you're making that guy (Warner) look like Gale Sayers," said Krejci. "We just looked at each other."

The Cornhuskers hadn't begun a season 1-2 since 1960, so "we were concerned that we were going to be remembered as the worst team (in the Bob Devaney-Osborne era)," Krejci said.

Such concerns evaporated with an

eight-game winning streak, which included Gill's becoming the starting quarterback in the fifth game against Colorado, and culminated in a Big Eight championship and a trip to the Orange Bowl, where Nebraska lost to eventual national champion Clemson, 22-15.

The Cornhuskers opened the next season by gaining revenge for the loss at Iowa City, defeating Iowa 42-7 in Lincoln to complete a four game, home-and-home series with the Hawkeyes.

The teams haven't played since, even though Iowa is Nebraska's oldest rival — not counting the Omaha YMCA, Nebraska's first football opponent in 1890, and Doane College, its second.

Nebraska and Iowa played football for the first time in 1891, with Iowa winning 22-0 at Omaha. The teams tied in 1892, then Nebraska began a three-game winning streak in 1893.

In all, the schools have played 39 football games against each other, with Nebraska holding a 24-12-3 advantage. At Iowa City, however, the advantage is only one game, 7-6.

This season's opener will be just the fifth time they've played in the last 53 seasons, however, and it will be just the fourth time in the 1990s the Cornhuskers have played a Big Ten opponent.

Playing Iowa again, though only this season and next, is good, according to Krejci. "I love to see it," he said. "Being so close, it's a great rivalry. And it helps that Iowa is in a different conference."

"It's not the same with Iowa State."

Nebraska hasn't lost a season-opener since the Iowa game in 1981.

"I remember the anxiety of it, being so close," said Krejci. "The only other game (that season) with that much anxiety was at Missouri when Phil Bates scored right at the end."

Bates scored on a 3-yard run with 23 seconds remaining for a 6-0 victory. The Cornhusker defense was impenetrable that afternoon at Faurot Field, just as it had been at Iowa City.

Krejci, who walked on at Nebraska following an outstanding high school career in Schuyler, Neb., was first-team All-Big Eight and earned Associated Press All-America honorable mention in 1981.

The Cornhuskers led the nation in pass defense that season, and Krejci led the Cornhuskers in pass interceptions with four. But it was one he didn't make that he remembers most.

"It was one of those moments in time," he said. ■



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Sept. 10/12	Husker Fila Invitational	
Sept. 10	USC vs. Portland	6 p.m.
	CONNECTICUT	7 p.m.
Sept. 12	USC vs. Connecticut	11 a.m.
	PORTLAND	1 p.m.
Sept. 24	TULSA	4 p.m.
Oct. 8	DENVER	7 p.m.
Oct. 15	KANSAS	7 p.m.
Oct. 17	MISSOURI	1 p.m.
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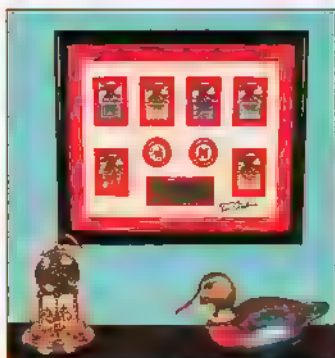
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Comparing Players

And the Nebraska football player of the century is . . .

Sorry. You really didn't think Huskers Illustrated would go out on that limb, did you? Identifying a single player from among the thousands who have represented Nebraska on the football field since 1900 would be presumptuous. The game has changed dramatically in 100 years. And it's impossible to compare offensive players to defensive players, much less players from one era to another.

Was quarterback Scott Frost more valuable than defensive tackle Jason Peter or rush end Grant Wistrom to Coach Tom Osborne's 1997 national championship team?

Could Ahman Green have rushed for 1,877 yards and 22 touchdowns without an offensive line that included the likes of Aaron Taylor, the winner of Nebraska's eighth Outland Trophy?

How much did Mike Rozier, the

Watch for Huskers Illustrated **TEAMS OF THE DECADE**

In the Next 10 Issues

Cornhuskers' second Heisman Trophy winner, depend on the blocking of such stalwarts as Dean Steinkuhler, an Outland Trophy and Lombardi Award winner?

Taylor and Steinkuhler are part of a tradition of outstanding offensive linemen, one of the best of whom was Dave Rimington, a two-time Outland Trophy winner, a Lombardi Award winner, a two-time consensus All-American and the Big Eight "Offensive

Player of the Year" in 1981.

But how would Rimington compare to Bob Brown, a guard on offense and a linebacker on defense? Or how would Rozier and Green compare to Bobby Reynolds, a stellar running back from another era who also distinguished himself as a defensive player in a one-platoon system?

Reynolds earned the nickname "Mr. Touchdown" as a sophomore in 1950, establishing what were school records

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for rushing yards (1,342) and touchdowns (22). He led the nation in scoring with 157 points and earned All-America honors, on a team that ranked 17th by the Associated Press.

Football is a team game. Players succeed through the efforts of teammates. Acknowledging that, certain Cornhuskers have stood above the rest during this century. And any list would include Rozier and Reynolds, as well as Tommie Frazier, Johnny Rodgers, Tom Novak and Ed Weir.

Frazier, now an assistant coach at Baylor, played on the national championship teams in 1994 and 1995 and earned the highest praise from Osborne, his Hall of Fame coach.

"I don't want to give the impression this is a one-man program in the last four years. But if I were to choose one player who has had the most impact on the outcome of the greatest number of games over the longest period of time since I've been at Nebraska, it would be Tommie Frazier."

Rodgers, Nebraska's first Heisman Trophy winner, also played on back-to-back national championship teams, including the one in 1971 sometimes regarded as the best in college football history.

However, "as great as that team was, take Johnny Rodgers out of there on kickoff and punt returns and it probably wouldn't have gone 13-0," said Osborne, Rodgers' position coach at the time.

Frazier and Rodgers made significant contributions on successful teams. Nebraska had a combined record of 11-26, under three coaches, during Novak's four seasons during the late 1940s. Yet there has never been a player who characterized Cornhusker football better than "Trainwreck."

Novak, Nebraska's only four-time all-conference football player, played both offense and defense. And he was the first Cornhusker whose jersey number was retired.

The tendency in such matters, of course, is to focus on contemporary players. But Ed Weir, who played in the "Roaring 20s," was as good as any to play for Nebraska. He even helped revolutionize the game by being among the first defenders to "red-dog," a forerunner to today's intricate blitzes.

Weir was the Cornhuskers' first two-time All-American, and he earned the respect of legendary Notre Dame Coach Knute Rockne, who, after his team defeated the Cornhuskers 34-6 at South Bend, Ind., in 1924, visited the

Nebraska locker room and announced: "I want Weir."

Rockne described Weir as the best lineman he had ever seen.

There are others from the first 50 years who would deserve consideration as the Cornhusker of the century, among them Guy Chamberlin, Sam Francis, George Sauer and Lloyd Cardwell.

Because such players might be overlooked even on a team of the century, Huskers Illustrated has decided to look at the last 100 years of Nebraska football on a decade-by-decade basis.

Even though some deserving players might still be overlooked, such a project should be fairer to the old-timers. In the next 10 issues, Huskers

Illustrated will present 10 teams of the decade, beginning with a 1900-to-1909 team and finishing with a 1990-to-1999 team.

Players will be included in the decade of their final season. So even though Forrest Behm, Warren Alfson and Ray Prochaska all played the majority of their careers in the late 1930s, they were seniors on the 1940 team that went to the Rose Bowl. So they'll be on the 1940-to-1949 team.

You'll find most of the players mentioned here and many, many more.

You might not agree with all of the selections. But that's OK. Such teams, of necessity, are based on opinion. They are intended to be representative, not definitive. ■

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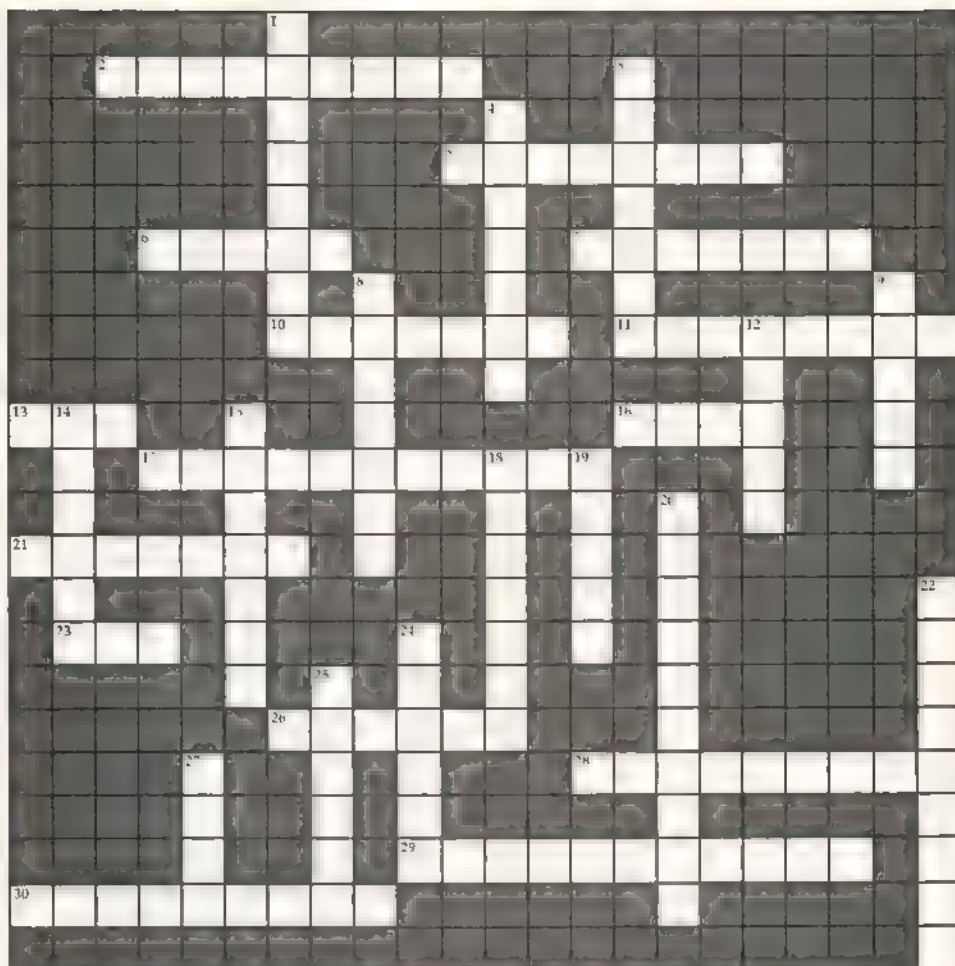
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- 5 U of Iowa location
- 6 NU athletic director
- 7 Iowa stadium
- 10 Iowa All-American from Omaha
- 11 NU sports information director
- 13 Former Iowa coach
- 16 NU linebacker coach
- 17 Defense nickname
- 21 1997 Lombardi winner
- 23 Spring Game winner
- 26 NU fullback recruit
- 28 NU's running back coach
- 29 Bobby Newcombe's hometown
- 30 Nickname before Cornhuskers

DOWN

- 1 NU coach before Bob Devaney
- 3 DeAngelo Evans' hometown
- 4 NU's 1998 sack leader
- 8 NU's leading 1998 receiver
- 9 NU kicking coach
- 12 NU strength coach
- 14 NU's all-time leading rusher
- 15 NU recruit from Canada
- 18 NU's first Heisman winner
- 19 NU radio play-by-play announcer
- 20 NU's leading 1998 rusher
- 22 1998 national champion
- 24 NU center from Hawaii
- 25 1997 Outland winner
- 27 Tom Osborne's first opponent

(Answers in Sept. 11 edition)



This Week in Husker History

August 29

1983 — The Cornhuskers, ranked No. 1 in the Associated Press preseason poll, win the first Kickoff Classic, defeating defending national champion Penn State 44-6 before 71,123 at Giants Stadium in the Meadowlands. Nebraska scores on two of its first three possessions.

August 30

1997 — The Cornhuskers take the first step toward a national championship in what will be Tom Osborne's final season as head coach, defeating Akron 59-14 at Memorial Stadium. Quarterback Scott Frost is the game's leading rusher, with 123 yards and two touchdowns on 11 carries.

August 31

1995 — The Cornhuskers take a first step toward a second consecutive national championship, over-

whelming Oklahoma State 64-21 at Stillwater, in a game televised by the ESPN cable network. I-back Lawrence Phillips gains 153 yards and scores three touchdowns on just 12 carries.

September 1

1990 — Nebraska opens the season with a 13-0 victory against Baylor at Memorial Stadium. The shutout is the Cornhuskers' first in a season-opener since the 1964 season, when they blanked South Dakota 56-0. The Blackshirts "saved our bacon," Coach Tom Osborne says afterward.

September 2

1978 — Nebraska falls victim to Bear Bryant's preseason No. 1-ranked Alabama Crimson Tide, losing a nationally televised game at Legion Field in Birmingham, 20-3. Nebraska scores first, on a Billy

Todd field goal, but is beset by offensive problems throughout the night.

September 3

1989 — Coach Tom Osborne uses 104 players as the Cornhuskers go to 2-0 with a 63-13 victory against Utah State at Memorial Stadium. Quarterback Steve Taylor completes 7-of-10 passes for 143 yards and one touchdown in becoming the eighth Nebraska player to throw for 2,000 career yards.

September 4

1993 — The Cornhuskers open an undefeated regular season, which sends them to the Orange Bowl and a national championship game, by racing past hapless North Texas 76-14. A 33-yard touchdown pass from Brook Berringer to Corey Dixon initiates the point barrage in a 28-0 first quarter.

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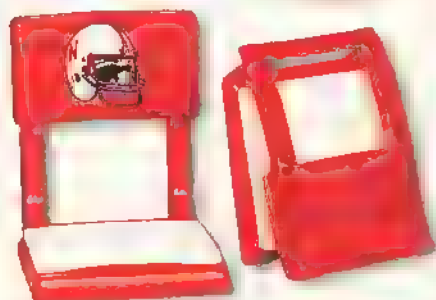
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It Took Time

Women's programs had to make do in early years

Everybody pitched in, even the administrators Barb Hibner, the assistant women's athletic director at the time, remembers grabbing a brush and helping paint the windows in the Coliseum brown.

The paint was necessary to keep "the sun out of our kids' eyes," Hibner said.

The kids to whom Nebraska's senior woman administrator referred were Coach Terry Pettit's Husker volleyball players, who often had to contend with sunlight during late-afternoon practices.

There were no shades to pull down. And no money to buy them.

"So I got up there and painted the dang windows," said Hibner, who also remembers "cooking hotdogs and cleaning up before and after the matches, not getting any support."

That was the state of women's athletics at Nebraska in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Women's programs had to make do with limited budgets, few resources and little support.

Such hardships were particularly apparent in Pettit's program because it didn't share facilities with a men's program. The women's basketball team, for example, shared the Devaney Sports Center with the men's team. So "the floor was going to be refinished every summer," Hibner said.

In addition, the women's team was "going to inherit the ball carriers the men used, so we didn't have to buy them. And we were going to inherit the baskets, the extra baskets. But if I'm Terry Pettit, there's no one over here (at the Coliseum) to share expenses, no one I can siphon off of."

Pettit's office is now on the second floor of the Coliseum. But there was a time when it was on the main level, and "you'd walk in, and there would be mice running around," said Hibner.

"It looked like the sink had been used to drain art supplies in. There were big pipes everywhere. And yet, Terry would bring in recruits, and he was getting the best recruits."

Pettit, who came to Nebraska from Louisburg, N.C., College in 1977, is the senior member of the women's athletic department, preceding Hibner by one



Barb Hibner remembers the early days of women's athletics at Nebraska.

year. He has seen dramatic changes, not just in the program he has taken to national prominence but throughout the department.

The changes could hardly be described as rapid, however. Early on, "there wasn't an embracing of women's athletics," Pettit said. "I think initially, it was tolerated. It was like any civil rights movement almost. It's tolerated, and you have to educate the public as to what it means."

Women's teams, which competed on a club basis within the state in the late 1960s under the Nebraska Women's Intercollegiate Sports Council, gained varsity status and became part of the athletic department in 1974-75. The impetus, of course, was Title IX, passed by Congress in 1972.

Title IX required equal opportunity for male and female student-athletes.

"Today if you put on the ballot should women have the opportunity to compete in sports, there would be an overwhelming majority who would support it," said Pettit. "But that wasn't the case in the 1970s. If there had been no Title IX, there would have been no women's athletics."

"Athletic departments weren't (so) inclined. They weren't visionary. But to Nebraska's credit, it decided: 'If we're going to do this, let's do it well.' I think initially one of the things that allowed Nebraska to be successful was that we jumped in with both feet. In any endeavor, if you're one of the first, it gives you a tremendous advantage, and you continue to reap the benefits

25 YEARS

of Women's Athletics

In celebration of 25 years of women's athletics at Nebraska, Huskers Illustrated will feature in upcoming issues stories with Husker women student athletes from the late 1970s and 1980s, remembering the way things were and discussing how things have changed.

years later."

Bob Devaney, the athletic director at the time, deserves credit for the success of women's athletics at Nebraska. "I'd be wrong if I didn't say without Title IX, it wouldn't have happened as quickly as it has, the opportunity for women," Hibner said. "That's obvious. All you have to do is look at the figures."

"But you can have all the rules you want; it's going to be the people in charge. The athletic director, believe me, is in a position to put the skids on where you're going and how you're going."

"Title IX is only as good as the CEOs who are in power at the time. And the CEOs, be it the athletic director or the chancellor, at Nebraska have always allowed the women to become all they're capable of being. I think we've had a great thing going here at the University of Nebraska."

Bill Byrne, Devaney's successor, has taken it to the next level, according to Pettit.

Byrne provided "a very subtle thing" by his presence. "I don't know how he does it," Pettit said. "But I've never been to an event here that Bill wasn't at. I think that changed the department."

Women's athletics at Nebraska actually date to the turn of the century, when basketball teams played limited schedules against opponents such as Minnesota and Missouri.

The teams were successful. But in April of 1908, the Board of Regents, under pressure from faculty members and the dean of women, abolished intercollegiate athletics for women.

More than 60 years would pass before women officially represented Nebraska in athletic competition again. The NCAA didn't get involved until the early 1980s. "It's been a long journey," said Hibner.

"But finally the women, the coaches, are getting the recognition they so well deserve." ■

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SIDEOUT

More Depth

*Despite the loss of an
outstanding senior class,
the 1999 Huskers might be
Terry Pettit's deepest team*

By Todd Henrichs

When Terry Pettit pencils in a starting lineup, he uses just that. A pencil.

Pettit has coached many of college volleyball's top players over the last 22 years at Nebraska. Eighteen have won All-American honors, and five eventually made this country's national team.

But most — if not all — had to fight for their starting job at one point or another in their career. Encouraging competition for playing time isn't a new coaching strategy, but it's a Pettit trademark.

Though minus the outstanding senior class of a year ago, this year's Huskers might be considered one of Pettit's dream teams. Perhaps the deepest Nebraska roster in history includes only two players — Nancy Meendering and Tonia Tauke — with extensive experience as starters. As many as 10 others could bid for quality court time.

Throw in the fact that any lengthy preseason preparations were squashed by Nebraska's participation in the season-opening State Farm Women's Volleyball Classic and it's easy to see how NU's starting six could be as turbulent as a night flight through a thunderstorm.

Nancy Meendering, an All-American as a sophomore, gained international experience during the summer with the U.S. National Team.

Like his team, Pettit — pencil in hand — said he's up for the challenge.

"It might be that somebody might not play much in the first match and will play a lot in the second, and maybe somebody who doesn't play that first weekend will play a lot the next," Pettit said as the hours counted down before the start of fall workouts. "Certainly, in the first month or so, we want to give a lot of people playing time."

Clearly, several of the Huskers worked extra hard in the offseason in hopes of earning a shot this fall. The majority of the team stayed in Lincoln to train this summer and was joined in July by the four members of NU's outstanding recruiting class.

Meendering toiled not only in Lincoln but spent better than half of her summer with the team which represented the U.S. in the World University Games. Coming off an All-America sophomore season, Meendering continued to develop into a consistent go-to player in Spain.

"I went into it wanting to just make the team," said Meendering, referring to her national team tryout that included more than 100 of the game's top college stars. "But once I talked to the coaches, and they explained to me what they expected my role to be, it went beyond just making it to really being a main part of the team."

"That's how I see my role at Nebraska."

Meendering stepped into the national spotlight, averaging 5.7 kills per game in Nebraska's final nine matches last season. As heavily as NU relied on her a year ago, Meendering may be asked to do more this season.

For the first time in three years, NU enters a campaign without an established setter. Three-year starter Fiona Nepo — the latest in a long line of NU All-Americans at the position — has turned over the job to junior Jill McWilliams.

Though the Iowa native has played in only 12 career matches, Pettit said she's prepared to follow in the footsteps of Nepo and the likes of Nikki Stricker, Christy Johnson, Val Novak, Lori Endicott, Tisha Delaney and Cathy Noth.

"Jill is probably further along than any new setter we've had," Pettit said. "Jill is probably more organized than Fiona was, or Nikki was, anybody except Christy because Christy had three years to prepare. Jill will play like an experienced player."

A senior who's started for two years, Tauke is the most experienced Husker and a solid force in the middle

of the net. Angie Oxley, Mandy Monson and even Kim Behrends have shown flashes of brilliance as left-side attackers for NU but must become more consistent this season.

Sophomore Jenny Kropp or Laura Pilakowski figures to step in as NU's quick attacker. Nebraska's 1999 recruiting class of Pilakowski, highly touted setter Greichaly Cepero of Puerto Rico, middle blocker Amber Holmquist of Texas and setter Lindsay Wischmeier of Lewiston was ranked third nationally by Volleyball Magazine.

"Even without the incoming freshmen, we would have a lot of competition for several positions," Pettit said. "I'm just trying to keep an open mind."

Pettit landed another recruit in the offseason, bringing in Wisconsin head coach John Cook to replace Noth on his NU coaching staff. Cook has concentrated on improving the Huskers defensively.

Preseason No. 3-rated NU returns Nikki Henk, its top defensive specialist, past letterwinners Kim Crandall and Katie Jahnke and Pam Krejci, a freshman coming off a redshirt season.

With so much quality depth, Nebraska will be favored to repeat as Big 12 champion, although the league

may be as balanced as ever. The Huskers' pre-conference schedule includes tests at Florida and back home against Wisconsin, in a repeat of last year's classic regional final match.

The State Farm Classic to be hosted by Nebraska at the NU Coliseum is a repeat of last year's Final Four, minus national champion Long Beach State. The tournament was to open with Nebraska facing Pacific on Aug. 27. The Huskers were to meet either Penn State or Florida a night later.

With so many questions to answer, Pettit surely would have preferred another year to face off against the best of the best so early in the season. But when the invitation came in the mail, he wasn't hesitant to RSVP.

Playing the best has brought Nebraska to the pinnacle of collegiate volleyball with a 1995 national championship and Final Four appearances three of the past four years.

Tampering with such goals hasn't crossed the coach's mind, even as visualizing the perfect starting lineup has.

"I think you have to set some goals and kind of a game plan and then not really vary from that," Pettit said. "It's a little bit different challenge for us in this kind of a situation, but in the long run, it will help us. ■"



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3 Transfers Could Start

The Nebraska men's basketball team will have more new faces than old ones this season, unless you count junior Rodney Fields, who sat out a medical redshirt a year ago after transferring from Tyler, Texas, Community College, and walkons Ross Buckendahl and Craig Wortmann.

Fields watched from the bench in street clothes, while Buckendahl and Wortmann earned letters for their contributions during practice and brief appearances in a handful of games.

But only four returning players saw significant action, compared to six newcomers. "We have a lot of new faces coming in," Coach Danny Nee is quoted in the Cornhuskers' summer prospectus.

As a result, "we might have a little different look next season."

That's true in more ways than one. Four of the six newcomers are junior college transfers, and three of those transfers could start immediately — barring unexpected eligibility problems.

Kimani Ffriend, who was recruited to replace Big 12 "Player of the Year" Venson Hamilton, was enrolled in 15 credit hours of summer school classes at Compton, Calif., Community College to

become academically eligible, according to a late-July report by the Omaha World Herald.

Ffriend played at Gulf Coast, Fla., Community College last season.

The other transfers projected as starters this season are power forward Steffon Bradford and point guard Danny Walker, teammates at Compton Community College. George Mazyck, the fourth transfer, is being counted on to provide inside muscle off the bench.

That he turned to the junior college ranks to put together a recruiting class ranked 18th-best in the nation and first in the Big 12 by The Hoop Scoop is a significant departure for Nee.

Nebraska hasn't had as many as four junior college transfers on its roster of scholarship players since Nee's first two seasons, and it has never had more than five during his tenure.

(Fields also is a junior college transfer, as are Buckendahl and Wortmann.)

At a news conference to announce his hiring, Nee said his recruiting philosophy would be to focus on high school athletes in order to develop continuity in the program.

His recruiting classes reflected that,

until now. In seven of the previous 12 seasons, he recruited only one junior college player, and in three of those seasons, he didn't recruit any.

Nee has shown a willingness to adapt his philosophy, however. For one thing, NCAA changes in initial eligibility standards have forced more quality players to attend junior colleges before going to Division I. For another, a reduction in scholarships allows less time for young players to develop.

In addition, there's no guarantee a player recruited as a freshman will use all four years of his college eligibility. Former Cornhusker Tyronn Lue left for the NBA after his junior season.

Whatever the factors, Ffriend, Bradford and Walker, might well join Cookie Belcher and Larry Florence in the starting lineup this season, assuming Belcher recovers quickly enough from surgery on his right wrist in early May. The four-hour surgery, to repair ligament and cartilage damage, was performed at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. Belcher wore a cast on his wrist and arm until late June.

"We are confident he will be ready at the start of the season," said Nee. ■

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Notes And Quotes From The Basketball World

BELCHER COULD SIT OUT AS REDSHIRT, BUT . . .

Cookie Belcher could sit out a medical redshirt if it came to that. But he's obviously a key to any hopes the Cornhuskers might have of repeating or improving on last season's success.

The senior from Mexico, Mo., already holds the school record for steals in a career (264), and he is third nationally in total steals among Division I players returning for this season. Temple's Pepe Sanchez is first with 280 career steals, followed by Syracuse's Jason Hart with 270.

Belcher is only 57 steals from the NCAA's all-time top 10. He is 70 shy of the combined conference record, held by Darnell Valentine of Kansas. And he is 112 short of the NCAA record.

If he is able to play this season, Belcher almost certainly will break the school career record for games started. He's currently tied with Jerry Fort for third with 97.

Dave Hoppen holds the record with 111 from 1983 to 1986.

Belcher, a third-team All-Big 12 selection last season, is 21st in career scoring at Nebraska (1,036 points), seventh in career 3-point shots made (98) and ninth in career assists (330).

FORMER LOUISVILLE ASSISTANT JOINS MEN'S STAFF

In addition to six new players, the Cornhusker men's team will have a new assistant coach this season. Larry Gay was hired in late-June to replace Jimmy Williams, who left after seven seasons on Nee's staff to accept a similar position at Big 12-rival Oklahoma State.

The 48-year-old Gay has 22 years of experience as a Division I assistant, most recently at Louisville under Coach Denny Crum. Gay was on Crum's staff from 1989 to 1996.

Prior to that, Gay spent four years at Florida State and 11 years at Georgia. He had worked at an automobile dealership in Louisville since resigning in the middle of the 1995-96 season.

His resignation came in the wake of an investigation of the Louisville basketball program. His involvement in the problems there was described by Nebraska officials as "very minor."

AROUND THE HORN

— Larry Florence, the only other senior on this year's team, needs 166 points to become the 22nd Cornhusker to score 1,000 career points. He averaged 10.5 points per game last season.

— There's no place like home. The Devaney Sports Center is being refurbished and will have two large-screen HuskerVision replay boards this season as part of a \$7.9 million project that includes new sound and lighting systems as well as roof repairs and major improvements in the concourse areas.

— Optimism about the upcoming women's season was tempered by forward Monique Whitfield's being sidelined by a torn anterior cruciate ligament, suffered in early July, and the announcement that prize recruits Margaret Richards and Keasha Cannon did not meet initial eligibility standards.

Whitfield, a potential starter, is expected to be out until at least December with the ACL injury, which was repaired by surgery. Richards, from Louisville, Ky., and Cannon, from Kansas City, Kan., both failed to achieve the minimum scores required by the NCAA on standardized tests.

"I'm very disappointed," Coach Paul Sanderford told the Lincoln Journal Star.

The Huskers are well-stocked at guard, however. The 16-player summer roster included 11 guards, one of whom might not be eligible until next season.

Melody Peterson, a transfer from Stanford who is walking on, has petitioned the NCAA to be eligible to play this season. Under NCAA transfer rules, Peterson would have to live in Lincoln for a year before playing for the Huskers. But a year has passed since she played at Stanford.

Peterson, a Los Angeles Times high school player of the year in Pasadena, Calif., was a member of Stanford's Final Four team in 1997 and started 12 games for the Cardinal as a sophomore.

Peterson and Whitfield, who's from Long Beach, Calif., are friends and former high school rivals. ■

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International Experience

World Cup play should be boost for NU program

By Todd Henrichs



Scott Babin

Isabelle Morneau, a preseason All-America selection, was one of four Nebraska players on Team Canada,

The United States clearly was the biggest winner in the Women's World Cup. If you ask Nebraska players and coaches, the Huskers' soccer program was a close second.

Nebraska, ranked No. 8 in the preseason, boasts nine returning starters and high hopes for the best finish in the six-year history of the program this fall. In three straight NCAA appearances, however, Nebraska has yet to make it past the third round.

The experience four Huskers

gained playing for Team Canada could be just the boost Nebraska needs to clear that hurdle this season. The Huskers opened training camp bursting with optimism and sharing thoughts of winning the national championship.

"That's the way it's been for the last couple of years, and that's the way it's going to be for a long time around here," Nebraska Coach John Walker said. "Athletically, this is probably the strongest group that we've had here at Nebraska. It's the fastest group, and they came in in

the best shape that we've seen here in our program's history.

"Our goal is straightforward. The goal is to win a national championship."

Isabelle Morneau, who played alongside NU teammates Amy Walsh, Sharolta Nonen and Karina LeBlanc on Team Canada, said she's as strong as ever after playing against the best players in the world this summer.

Morneau, a preseason All-America pick, is the only Big 12 player to win all-conference honors at three different positions.

"Obviously, when I came back, I was a better player. More experienced," said Morneau, whose Canadian team suffered two losses and a tie in World Cup play. "Just having some international games under my belt is going to help me maybe with my confidence. I think it will have a big impact on the way I play."

Nebraska returns its defense intact from a year ago, with Morneau flanked by Nonen and Christine Gluck and LeBlanc in goal.

Walsh and Meghan Anderson join Jenny Benson as returning starters in the midfield. Benson, who sat out last season following reconstructive knee surgery, is just two assists away from becoming NU's all-time leader.

At forward, Lindsay Eddleman can become the school's all-time scoring leader this season. Lauren Tatum is also a returning starter and sophomores Kelly Rheem, and Becky Preston have seen limited starting experience.

Coming off a 17-4-1 campaign, Nebraska will need a veteran lineup against what arguably is the nation's toughest schedule. In a 10-day stretch in September, NU will face three of the top four teams in the preseason coaches' top 25. The Huskers are favored in the Big 12 but will face stiff challenges from Baylor and Texas A&M.

Nebraska opens at home Aug. 27 against the Big 12's Texas Tech.

Staying healthy is key, as is winning home-field advantage through the NCAA Tournament. By doing that, Nebraska might hoist a trophy of its own come December.

"With the talent we have out here, it's just going to be a matter of pulling it together as a team," Benson said. "If we can do that, we have a great shot to go to the Final Four and hopefully bring home a national championship." ■

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High Hopes

Transfer, returnees give Husker coach reason for optimism

By Mark Derowitsch

There's nothing unusual about Nebraska cross country coach Jay Dirksen being an optimist. Dirksen usually looks at a situation and immediately sees the potential instead of the drawbacks.

This fall, don't be fooled by Dirksen's usual optimism about the Huskers' cross country teams. He has a reason to be excited about the 1999 season.

For instance, the Nebraska women's team is coming off a season in which it placed 23rd at the NCAA Cross Country Championships but lost its second-best runner, when Amy Wiseman decided to transfer to Arkansas.

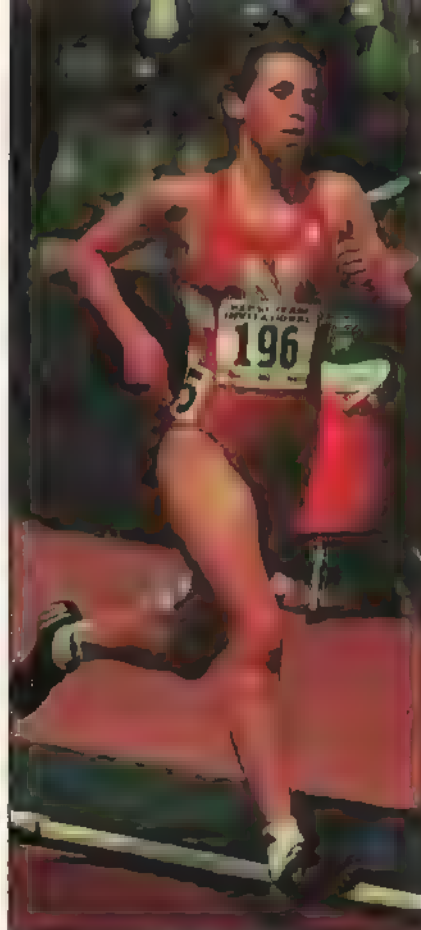
Thanks to a highly touted newcomer and the additional experience of two top runners, Dirksen believes this team could be even better.

Joining the Huskers this fall is Michelle Brooks, a senior transfer from Lancaster University, which is located in Preston, United Kingdom. Brooks, who will enter Nebraska as a graduate student and has just one year of eligibility, has the potential to take on the role as Nebraska's top runner. She was a member of the Great Britain Junior World Championship team and was the top ranked female junior (age 19 and under) distance runner in the country in 1996.

Add Brooks to returning Huskers Jeannette Zimmer, Nebraska's top runner as a freshman last season, Jaime Pauli and Melinda Mohr Oliver, and Dirksen thinks his women's team has four top-flight runners to build the team around.

Brooks is the key.

"I think Michelle will be a stabilizing force for our team," Dirksen said. "Her level of training is a little higher than the rest of the women on the team, and she'll help bring the rest of the team along. Plus, she's very intelligent and very dedicated. She's the complete package."



Jeannette Zimmer was Nebraska's top runner as a freshman.

Zimmer is coming off her first college season, when she was Nebraska's top runner for much of the season. At the NCAA Championships, Zimmer placed 70th individually with a time of 18 minutes, 1.18 seconds. It was the Huskers' best individual finish at the national meet in three years.

Zimmer also placed 11th at the NCAA Midwest Regionals to help the Huskers receive an at-large berth into the NCAA meet.

"Jeannette has improved a lot since last year, and she wasn't too bad last year," Dirksen said. "I don't think she has the No. 1 position sewed up this year, but that's OK. Our team should be better."

Pauli is also expected to produce this fall, giving the Huskers another Big 12 Conference veteran as a leader.

"Last year, Jeannette ran great, and I expect her to be just as good if not better because she won't have to carry all the load," Dirksen said. "Jaime Pauli really developed to the point where I expect her to be up there with Michelle and Jeannette. That would give us three pretty solid people up front."

Two other veterans — Amie Finkner and Mohr Oliver — will add depth to the team. In addition, Jenna Lucas, Deb Osteen and Jamie Krueger are expected to figure in the mix some-

where, Dirksen said.

The Huskers were one of seven teams from the Big 12 to qualify for the national meet last season. Dirksen expects the Huskers to make another trip to nationals, and it could be as one of the nation's best teams.

"I know we're going to have a good team," he said. "You don't know if you have a great team until that good team sees what it has to do to take the next step and then goes out and does it. Having said that, I think we're a good team that has a chance to be a really good team and maybe even a great team. I'm pretty excited."

Dirksen believes the Husker men's team will be better than it was a year ago. Last year, Nebraska placed eighth in the Big 12 Conference after its top runner, Jeroen Broekzitter, was dismissed from the team in the week leading up to the conference race. In 1997, Broekzitter placed 20th at the national meet as a freshman.

As a result, an out-manned Nebraska team failed to qualify for the NCAA meet.

"That was the most frustrating year I've had at Nebraska," said Dirksen, who is starting his 17th year. "After last year, we have nowhere to go but up."

Nebraska will rely on veterans Tony Smith and Marcus Witter. Smith was 51st at the NCAA Midwest Regionals last season while Witter, a junior from Kearney, Neb., was the team's top runner early in the season.

"Both Tony and Marcus decided they wanted to be really good and stepped up their training accordingly," Dirksen said. "Last year, they weren't as strong physically as you need to be at this level, and both worked hard in the weight room this year. They should be pretty solid."

Aaron Carrizales and Todd Trippie, both juniors, were among Nebraska's top seven runners.

Dirksen will also count on four freshmen to round out the team. Jed Barta of Idaho Falls, Idaho, finished 17th in the Footlocker National Cross Country Championships last year and was considered one of the top high school distance runners in the nation. Also, first-year runners Mike Kamm of Bellevue, Wash., James De Bruhl, who placed third at the California High School State Meet in the 1,600-meter run, and Ian Gray of Eugene, Ore., could have an immediate impact.

"This was the best recruiting class we've ever had as far as distance runners are concerned," Dirksen said. "This could be the start of an exceptional team down the road." ■

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Camps Help NU Gain Momentum

Huskers among early leaders in recruiting commitments

By James Hale

There are those who always try to find chinks in the armor of the grand Nebraska football program. However, if you look just at the early results of the national recruiting war, your conclusion would be that the Cornhuskers are still one of the top five programs in the country.

Nebraska is getting ready for its season-opener against Iowa and already has eight of its projected 22 scholarships pledged for. This is the same position the huskers have been in the last several seasons.

Nebraska was one of the first schools to actively try to commit its entire class before the Christmas holidays. Their awesome football camps every year allow the Huskers to evaluate many of the top football players in the country. Conversely, those players get to see the Nebraska program first hand for a three-day period.

This benefit, plus an aggressive recruiting attitude, has kept Nebraska ahead of the recruiting game for years. Once again, it is one of the early leaders in the national recruiting polls. Penn State is another that traditionally jumps out and commits a great number of its class, and Joe Paterno's group has 14 commitments at press time.

Nebraska is not too far behind, especially with its surge of commitments since our last issue. At press time, the Huskers have eight oral commitments, and the class is off and running toward a top 10 ranking.

The most recent commitment came from offensive lineman Josh Plisch (6-foot-4, 290 pounds, with 5.1 speed in the 40 yard dash) of Scofield (D.C. Everest), Wisc.

"The tradition of the Nebraska offensive line was just too much for me to pass up," Plisch said.



Nebraska recruit Ira Cooper plays running back and linebacker for Omaha Westside.

"Nebraska recruits the top offensive linemen in the country, and when they offered me a scholarship, I just couldn't turn it down. If you are good enough to play at Nebraska, then you are good enough to play in the pros, and that played a part in my thinking. However, what was more important was the fact that Nebraska is a great program that wins, they have great coaches, and the players all seem on the same page. It just seemed like the perfect school to me."

Running back DeWayne Long (6-1, 205, 4.5) of West Des Moines, Iowa didn't wait long to commit to the Huskers. Considered by most one of the top two prospects in Iowa, Long is a power-style tailback who could also be a fullback at Nebraska.

He missed three games a year ago, but still managed to rush for more than 900 yards in Dowling's three-back attack. That's a pretty good attack, too, as Dowling was the state runner-up last season.

"DeWayne is one of the most

physical players that I have ever coached," said Dowling Coach Matt Dillion. "He is one of the hardest working kids I have ever been around. Now, he plays three different sports for us and never really gets a chance to really get into a weight room. He will be a dominant player once he gets to concentrate on football."

Long is also a star on the Dowling basketball, baseball and track teams. He picked the Huskers over Ohio State, Michigan, Michigan State, Kansas State, Notre Dame and Iowa. It should be noted that Dowling went to the Notre Dame and Purdue summer camps before picking Nebraska.

The Huskers have four out-of-state commitments. Nebraska earned early commitments from preseason All-American outside linebacker Jason Richenberger (6-3, 210, 4.5) of Liberty, Mo., and place-kicker/fullback Sandro DeAngelis (5-8, 185, 4.4) of Buffalo (St. Joseph's), N.Y.

The Huskers have also been busy in-state, getting commitments from eight-man star Steve Kriewald (5-11, 242, 4.89) of North Loup-Scotia and offensive lineman Mike Erickson (6-4, 270, 5.1) of Papillion-LaVista. Kriewald is projected as a fullback at Nebraska but does a little bit of everything for his high school team. The four-year starter has played offensive guard, defensive line, fullback and linebacker. Kriewald also returns punts and kicks.

On defense, Kriewald made 208 tackles, including 98 solos, and had four fumble recoveries, two interceptions, one sack and 29 tackles for losses. At fullback, Kriewald rushed for 655 yards, at 8.2 yards per carry, and 10 touchdowns. Throw in a 39.2-yard punting average, and you have a very versatile player heading to Nebraska.

"The one good thing about eight-man football is that you get to do a little bit of everything on the field," Kriewald said. "I think it has been a great experience for me and will benefit me when I get to Nebraska. I have always been a Nebraska fan. Just getting to know the players made me already feel like I was a part of the team. I love the atmosphere and everything that Nebraska football stands for."

Kriewald also starts in basketball and won the state shot put title with a toss of 61 feet, 7 inches.

Erickson is another player who has grown up a Nebraska fan. A three-year starter for the Monarchs, Erickson had a super junior season

NOTES

It's still somewhat early in the recruiting process, but several schools have jumped out and grabbed a number of oral commitments to take the lead in the recruiting race.

In the Big 12 Conference, Texas is once again being very aggressive early with nine commitments, all coming from top players in Texas, Oklahoma and Arizona. Nebraska has eight, Oklahoma State five, Texas A&M four, Colorado and Oklahoma three and Missouri one.

Texas is on its way to putting together one of the top five recruiting classes in the country for the second straight year, with the early commitments of four Texas top-20 talents. Quarterback Chance Mock of The Woodlands is generally considered the top quarterback in Texas and one of the top 10 in the country. Defensive tackle Marcel Moses of Texas City may be the top defensive lineman in Texas, and he will team with Sonny Davis of Austin (Lanier), Texas, who is ranked right with Moses.

Running back Arturo Beltran of Abilene is thought to be one of the top three running backs in Texas. The Longhorn kicking game also should be taken care for the future with commitments from place-kicker Matt McPadden of Coppell, Texas, and punter Justin Smith of Midland, Texas. Offensive lineman Jason Glynn of Richardson (Berkner) is considered the top center prospect in Texas.

Just recently, the Longhorns earned a commitment from the top player in Oklahoma in defensive end Adam Dorion of Duncan. Rounding out the early oral commitments for the Longhorns is Austin Sandlein of Scotsdale (Chaparral), the top linebacker in Arizona.

Nebraska is once again clearing up in-state, as fullback Steve Kriewald of North Loup-Scotia, outside linebacker Ira Cooper of Omaha Westside and tight end Chris Septak of Millard West have all committed early. All three are ranked in the top five in-state, with Septak regarded as a preseason All-American and ranked as one of the top five tight ends in the country.

The Cornhuskers have also added speed outside linebacker Jason Richenberger of Liberty, Mo., fullback DeWayne Long of West Des Moines, Iowa, and place kicker/fullback Sandro DeAngelis Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. Richenberger is one of top 10 players in the Midlands area, while Long is one of the top 20.

Oklahoma State is off to a good start, with commitments from defensive end Clay Coe of Edmond (Deer Creek), Okla., tight end Lance Donley of Weatherford, Okla., tight end and top-50 Texas talent Derrius Whitehead of Waxahachie, tight end Kyle Williams of Ardmore (Plainview), Okla., and offensive lineman Derek LaFargue of Springdale, Ark.

Texas A&M loves its class thus far, headed by defensive back Adam Black of Cy-Falls, Texas, wide receiver Eric Crutchfield of Galena Park (North Shore), Texas, wide receiver Robert Ferguson of Tyler Junior College, Texas, and linebacker Brian Thompson of Tyler (Lee).

Colorado has racked up three commitments in defensive lineman Matt McChesney of Niwet, Colo., and running back Bobby Purdy of Colorado Springs (Palmer). The most recent comes from Brandon Daboub (6-foot-2, 290 pounds, 4.9 40-yard dash), a defensive lineman from Metairie (Rummell), La.

Oklahoma has three commitments: Speed linebacker Ted Lehman of Fort Gibson, Okla., excelled at the Sooner camp with a 4.37 clocking in the 40-yard dash. Running back Rudy Wells of Linden (Kildare), Texas, also earned a scholarship during the summer camp. However, the big news for the Sooners came recently when All-American offensive lineman Wes Sims of Weatherford, Okla., picked the Sooners over the Longhorns.

Missouri's only commitment comes from tight end Brian Casey of North Kansas City Mo., one of the top ten players in the state ■



Steve Kriewald has played several positions for North Loup-Scotia.

with 38 pancake blocks. He has worked his bench press up to 350 pounds and his squat up to 480.

"I have lived here all my life and watched Nebraska for as long as I can remember," Erickson said. "It's always been a dream of mine to play for Nebraska. I think they have the very best program in the country."

They join All-American tight end Chris Septak (6-5, 235, 4.7) of Millard West and linebacker Ira Cooper (6-3, 220, 4.5) of Omaha Westside.

The next in-state commitment is likely to come from athlete Ben Zajicek (6-1, 205, 4.4) of Beatrice. A tailback on offense, Zajicek rushed for 774 yards, at 5.5 yards per carry, and had six touchdowns. At cornerback, he made 35 tackles and came up with four interceptions. Zajicek is being recruited as a wide receiver.

Offensive lineman Ryan Schmuecker (6-5, 260, 5.0) of Lincoln Southeast can bench 325 and squat 450. He attended camps at Nebraska and Colorado State. The Rams offered Schmuecker at their camp. Schmuecker says Nebraska wants to watch a few games this season before offering a scholarship.

Jamaine Billups (5-9, 190, 4.49) of Omaha Central is the top running back prospect in the state. A year ago, Billups rushed for 893 yards and 11 touchdowns and is looking at Kansas, Nebraska, Michigan as his top three, with Kansas State and Colorado State in the loop.

Cornerback Lornell McPherson (5-9, 170, 4.55) of Omaha Central is a three-year starter who earned a scholarship offer during the Husker camp. He's considering Nebraska, along with Iowa and Michigan.

Wide Receiver Richard Ross (6-4, 190, 4.6) of Lincoln High caught 44 passes for 921 yards and six touchdowns. Ross is wide open in his

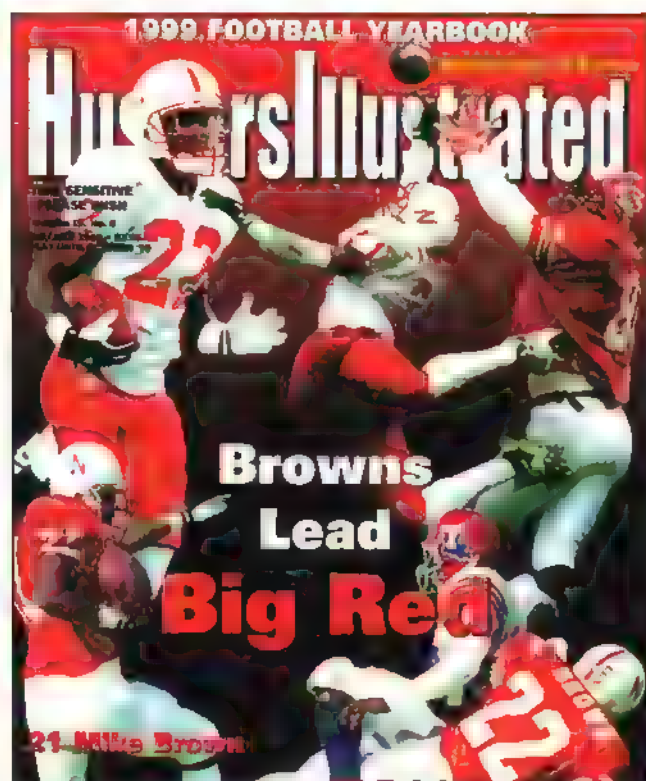
recruiting thoughts and is considering New Mexico State, Arizona, Iowa, Iowa State, Nebraska and Colorado State. Offensive lineman Mitch Manstedt (6-3, 275, 5.3) of Clarks is another in-state player drawing Division I attention. He is also an outstanding wrestling prospect and might choose the mat instead of football

Nebraska has offered, along with Minnesota and Cornell.

During the season, another in-state player will emerge and earn a Division I scholarship. This happens every year, so I always count on it.

In the next issue, I will look at the top quarterbacks in the country considering Nebraska. ■

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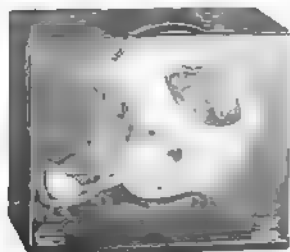
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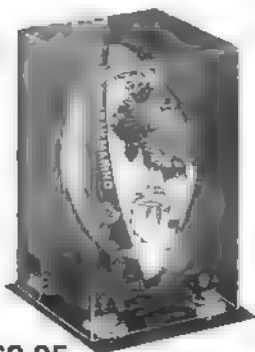
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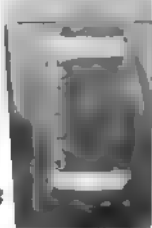


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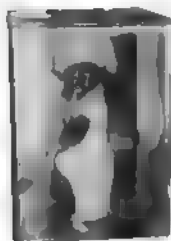


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Tradition Makes Recruiting Loss More Difficult

Alberts' interest in Iowa wavered after a visit to Nebraska



Mike Babcock

TREV ALBERTS GREW UP an Iowa fan. He lived in Cedar Falls, Iowa, where "it was well understood that if you ever got a scholarship (offer) to Iowa, you were going to Iowa," he has said.

Alberts' parents were such Hawkeye fans that "it was almost like a slap in the face in the beginning to even talk to another team," the former Nebraska football All-American said.

Iowa's recruiting interest in Alberts was understandable. He was a two-time all-state linebacker at Northern University High School and the Class 1A player of the year as a senior.

Alberts was a little reluctant to visit Nebraska, until "my dad said: 'I think you definitely ought to take a trip out there, you know, just see what they have. You'll still go to Iowa,'" he said.

"When we went to Nebraska, it was well understood: 'We're just going out there for a free trip.'"

In some cases, a key to recruiting an athlete is simply getting him to campus, which is why Dan McCarney, then an Iowa assistant, tried to persuade Alberts not to visit Nebraska.

McCarney's concern was justified. Alberts was so impressed by what he saw that his interest in Iowa wavered. His parents, who had accompanied him on the recruiting trip, sensed his change of heart during the drive back to Cedar Falls. Nothing was said, however, until they reached Des Moines.

"You know, Trev, we sure would like to see you at Iowa," his dad said. But, his dad added, if he had changed his mind about playing for the Hawkeyes, "we certainly could understand."

The rest is pleasant history for Cornhusker fans. Alberts was a unanimous consensus All-American, Nebraska's first Butkus Award winner and an Academic All-American in 1993. His unique skills as a pass rusher contributed to Nebraska's decision to change its defensive philosophy.

Iowa was an unwilling good neighbor in providing Nebraska with Alberts and several other football players over the past 20 years, among them Roger Craig, Jamie Williams and Bill Lewis.

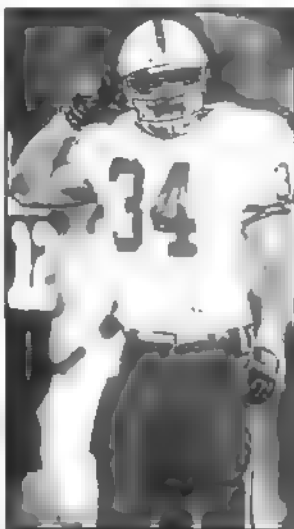
Two Iowans are atop the depth chart going into the opener at Iowa City, junior rush end Kyle Vanden Bosch from Larchwood and senior punter Dan Hadenfeldt from Des Moines.

The Cornhuskers don't recruit a lot of players from Iowa, and the Hawkeyes rarely attract football players from Nebraska. There have been a few, however, most notably Larry Station, a consensus All-America linebacker in 1984 and 1985 from Omaha Central High School

Nile Kinnick, an All-American and the Hawkeyes' only Heisman Trophy winner in 1939, was a graduate of Omaha Benson High School. Iowa's football stadium is named in his honor.

Iowa is Nebraska's second-oldest opponent, not counting the Omaha YMCA, and its oldest from out of state. The Cornhuskers have long since quit playing the oldest, Doane College in Crete.

The schools first played each other in football on Thanksgiving Day in 1891 at Omaha. The "season" was Nebraska's second and Iowa's third. Iowa won 22-0, before an audience of some 2,000, according to the book "University of Iowa Football: The Hawkeyes," written by Chuck Bright in 1982.



Cedar Falls, Iowa, native Trev Alberts became an All-American at Nebraska.

Histories of Nebraska football often credit Iowa with loaning the Nebraska team its coach, Theron U. Lyman, apparently an inaccuracy based on the fact that Lyman, a Yale graduate, had played previously at Iowa College in Grinnell, Iowa. The Hawkeye media guide lists no Iowa coach for 1891.

Lyman as a loaned coach makes a better story, however

Another popular story, more likely based in fact, is that Iowa at least indirectly provided the inspiration for Nebraska's athletic teams to be nicknamed Cornhuskers.

Cy Sherman, considered the "father of the Cornhuskers" for giving them their nickname, attended the Nebraska-Iowa game at Omaha on Thanksgiving Day of 1893 — he was a young man — and didn't think the next day's newspaper reference to Nebraska's team as the Bugeaters was appropriate.

A year later, after Nebraska had defeated Iowa 36-0, again in Omaha, the university student newspaper reported: "We have met

the 'cornhuskers' and they are ours." The reference had been meant as a slight. But apparently Sherman, who became a nationally known sports writer, didn't see it that way.

Around 1900, he began referring to Nebraska teams as the Cornhuskers and the name stuck

Even though Nebraska and Iowa haven't played each other regularly since the 1940s, the series has a unique tradition, which could only exist between universities in neighboring states.

That tradition makes a recruiting loss of an All-American such as Alberts or Station even more difficult than it would have been otherwise. It also makes this season's brief renewal of the series special. ■

Mike Babcock is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at mdb@netnebr.com or P.O. Box 8782, Lincoln, NE 68506



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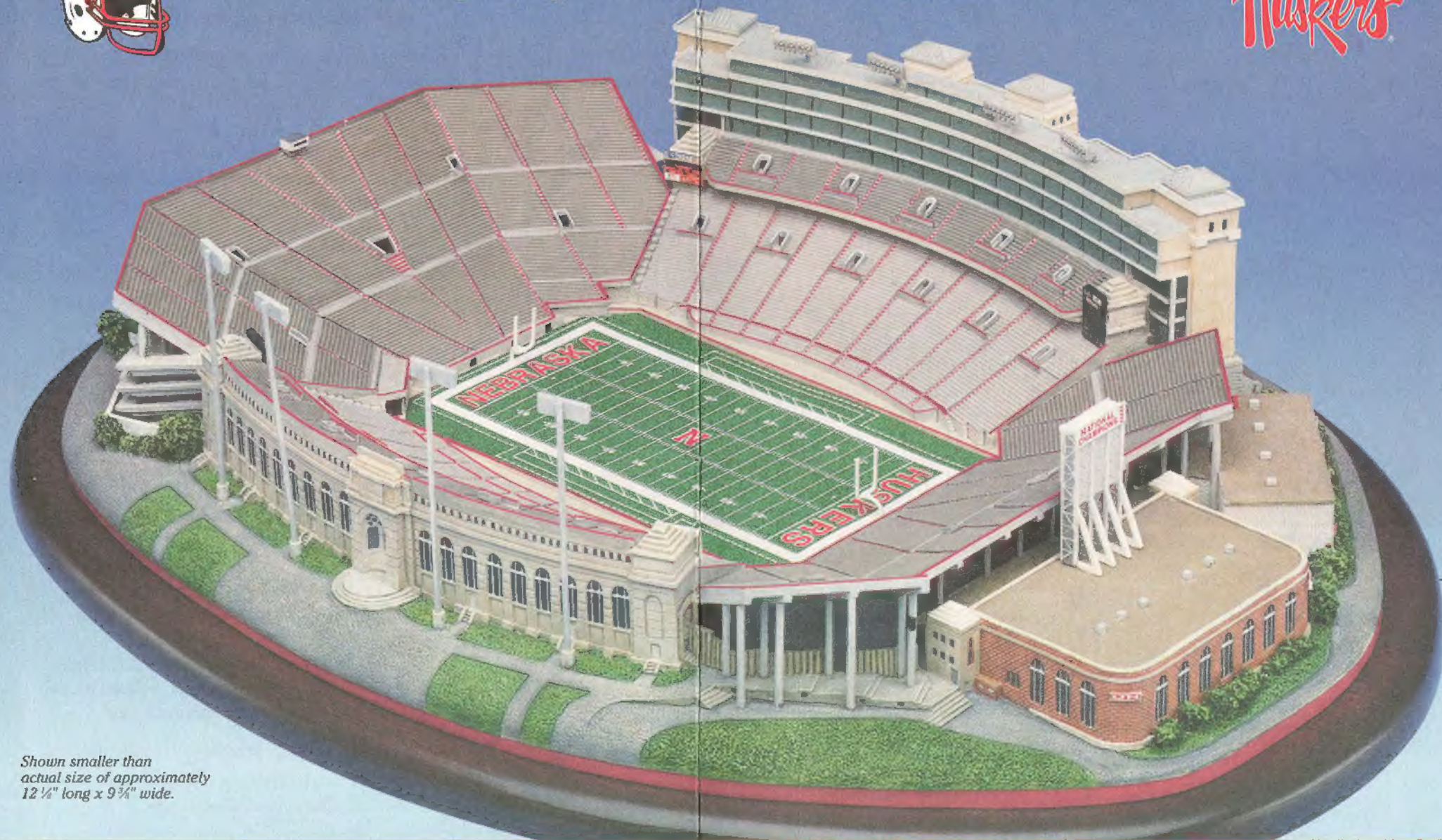
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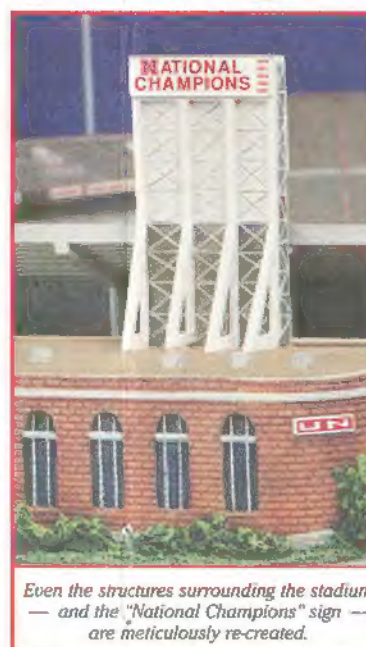


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